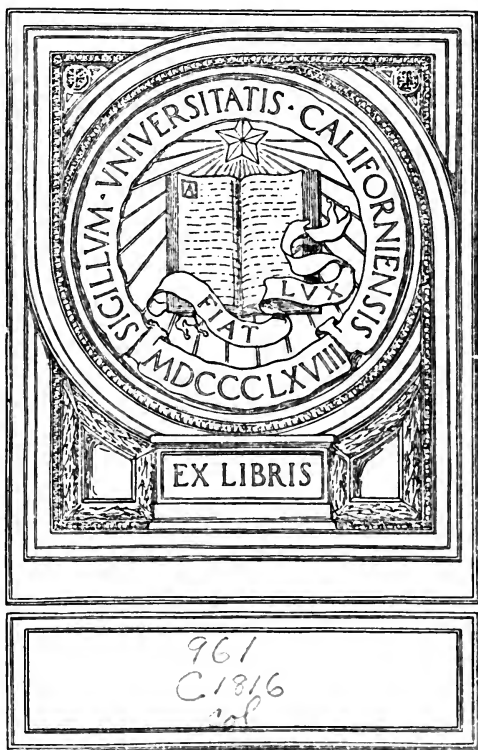


OF COLONEL
from WYOMING



Some nonsense from the
pen of

J. H. Camera

Hakau, C. B.,

January 24, 1908.

A COLONEL FROM WYOMING

By
JOHN ALEXANDER HUGH CAMERON



UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

TORONTO
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TO VIRGIL
AIRBORNE

To My Mother.

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PREFACE

BY HON. D. C. FRASER, LL. D., D. C. L.,

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF NOVA SCOTIA.

I have read with great interest the advance sheets of your first literary venture. As a citizen, proud of my native province, I desire to thank you that from an active professional life you devote the hours, too often spent uselessly by young men, in doing service to your native land, and in putting in permanent form the manners of our people and virtues of days fast changing, I fear not to our profit. For an intellectual, well-educated province, too little has been done to describe our unrivalled scenery or the characteristics of our people. In describing both of these you have been successful, and I trust your first venture may be only the beginning of further and even more successful triumphs. I feel sure that you will strive to overcome any small defects that, as in the case of all young authors, may have crept into this charming story.

Like all true romances, your story has its strong characters. I would name two that you have drawn with rare skill. The smuggler is not only a fine type of our seaman, but in every page where he appears you have kept him to the same high uniformity. That he violated our

revenue laws does not, in your portrayal, make him a law-breaker that offends. Indeed, you can claim for him the dictum of a learned professor of political economy who described smuggling as "a rude method of rectifying a wrong."

I can almost sympathize with a man whose home is on the sea, feeling and acting as he did when he sees the ocean inviting commerce to our shores from all lands without let or hindrance. So strong is this feeling in a maritime people that the most rigid sometimes overlooks the revenue laws when returning from abroad. The desire to exchange commodities seems to overcome the conviction of strict adherence to fulfilling the law.

Seldom have I met with a character so well drawn as the smuggler; we overlook the violation of law-breaking in him because of his fine manly life and action.

Grandfather is a fine type of a race fast passing away. The men who came to Nova Scotia from Scotland were noble colonists. They were physically strong, mentally vigorous, socially generous and in their dealings honest and honorable. They did not parade their piety, but their lives showed how deeply they felt, and how daily they walked as pilgrims seeking a better country. The scene of his home-going is so pathetic that no one can read it unmoved or rise from its perusal without a higher ideal of our fallen nature.

I might say much of the nomenclature of the people of the Island. I have met with it wherever our Highlanders are found. The chapter on the stock craze is excellent and incidental remarks on education have the

charm of correct and blunt truthfulness. Altogether I heartily commend the book to all. It has none of the trashy modern swash about it, and its perusal will give no suggestion to our young readers other than wholesome, strong, and manly mental purity.

Government House, Halifax, N. S.,

July 30, 1907.

MY DEAR MR. CAMERON,

I am returning the proofs of "A Colonel from Wyoming," which I have read with great interest, together with a statement of what I consider some of the strong points in your book. I do not know whether it would be well to publish a work of this kind with a preface, but I have no objection to your making use of what I have written.

I congratulate you most heartily on your first venture, and I am very glad that you have shown your desire in this excellent book that you, at least, will furnish your quota towards increasing the literature of our province.

Yours very sincerely,



J. A. H. CAMERON, ESQ.,
Barrister,
Mabou, C. B.

A COLONEL FROM WYOMING.

CHAPTER I.

IN THE FAR WEST.

REJOICING in the possession of perfect health, and surrounded, as she undoubtedly was, with a very generous share of the good things of this earth, it was strange, indeed, that Marion Thurlow, young, beautiful, gifted, should not have been happy on the auspicious day of her graduation from Radcliffe College. She had carried off the highest honours in her class, too. But she was unhappy, very, very unhappy, for she had expected from afar some one who did not come.

“What is the matter with Marion to-day?” was a question often asked by her classmates—a question to which various answers were given, some kind, others unkind, but which could only be correctly answered by Miss Thurlow herself, who was silent as to the real cause of her unhappiness.

While the Commencement Exercises were in progress at Radcliffe; far, far away, over mountain, and

river, and prairie—in the West, in the wilds of the far, far West, a man, mounted on a well-trained, fleet-footed, Kentucky-bred horse, might be seen hastening southward towards the city of Cheyenne. He had already come a long distance, but had still about twenty miles further to go before he should reach his destination.

Attired in the raiment of the typical plainsman, with his sombrero and buckskin coat, with a silk handkerchief tied loosely around his neck and with spurs tinkling rhythmically as his horse cantered along, no one would have taken him for other than an ordinary plainsman did they not see his face, tanned though it was by the wind and the sun, yet so indicative of refinement, intellectuality, strength of character. Broad-shouldered, deep-chested, tall, dark, with regular clear-cut features, and keen dark eyes, he was, indeed, no ordinary plainsman, but an only son of General Gordon, Lightning Bill, Old Lightning or Lightning Gordon, the great Indian fighter; a Colonel of the Wyoming National Guard; a graduate of Harvard University; a famous hunter who well knew the haunts of white-tailed deer and mountain sheep, of elk and grizzly; an excellent shot within range of whose Winchester it was not safe for even the fleet-footed antelope to venture; an engineer of high standing in his profession; a practical miner who had already successfully operated large mining properties in California and New Mexico but who preferred healthy outdoor life on the plains to the worries and cares of

official position, and had therefore purchased, at Horse Creek, sixty miles northeast of the capital of Wyoming, a large ranch on which he now resided.

When but a mere lad in his teens he served as a scout under his distinguished father, to whom he now bore a striking resemblance not only in appearance but in character as well; and while in active service, he was twice wounded in skirmishes with the Indians—in the shoulder by a stealthy Wyoming Shoshone, in the thigh by a fierce Arizona Apache. He was still young, not having completed his thirtieth year: but he was a man of large experience in the affairs of life; a man of culture and of force; a profound student and shrewd observer; a strong, many-sided, aggressive, progressive type of western civilization.

His first meeting with Miss Thurlow was during his last year at Harvard, eight years before, when she was but a mere child of twelve. From that time forward he was a hearty admirer of the pretty, brown-haired girl, little thinking then of how necessary to his happiness he should now believe her to be. He had only seen her once since he had left Harvard, and that was two years before this. But they had corresponded with more or less regularity from the time he had left the University; and besides, had exchanged Christmas, Easter, and birthday presents.

Three weeks before the Commencement Exercises at Radcliffe, she had written, inviting him to Boston for her graduation day; but it was only the night before that he had received her letter, and he was now on

his way to the nearest telegraph office to tender his congratulations and to express his regrets.

Arriving at Cheyenne, two hours later, all covered with dust and not a little fatigued after his long ride in the hot sun, he made straightway for the Western Union Telegraph Office, and in a few minutes the following message was on its way to the East:

“Cheyenne, Wyo., June 28, —.

“MISS MARION THURLOW,

FERNWOOD,

BEACON STREET,

BOSTON, MASS.

“Please accept my heartiest congratulations on the happy occasion of your graduation from Radcliffe.

“I deeply regret not having received your kind invitation until last night, as I should have been most happy to have gone East to be present at the Commencement Exercises to-day.

“Kindest regards to your mother and to yourself.

“W. CLIFFORD GORDON.”

CHAPTER II.

THE BOY AND THE SMUGGLER.

THAT same evening, after the lazy roll of the restless Gulf of St. Lawrence had given way to a most peaceful calm, a schooner, under full sail, might be seen drifting northward with the tide, along the west coast of the historic Island of Cape Breton. The sun, now half-sunk at the far edge of this restful expanse of water, sent a flood of golden light to the long, irregular shore opposite, by a broadening pathway which was, indeed, gloriously beautiful.

In the door of an old-fashioned farm-house, situated but a short distance from the shore, stood a middle-aged woman of medium height and spare frame.

"Was there ever a more glorious sunset?" she exclaimed at length, after feasting her kindly, dark-brown eyes on the fascinating beauties of restful sea and cloudless, western sky.

"Never, mother, never," replied her little son; a handsome, brown-eyed lad of thirteen, with long, curly, dark-brown hair.

He happened to be sitting on the doorstep at the time, and his mother gave him an affectionate glance; then, with tear-dimmed eyes, she looked across the field to the churchyard yonder, where his five little

sisters and four little brothers slept side by side, and where one small tombstone tells more of their simple history than the great world cares to know. The only one remaining of that happy little group, he was destined to meet Colonel Gordon under circumstances which might be regarded as somewhat strange, and as their meeting is to prove more than an ordinary incident in the Colonel's varied and eventful life, it may not be altogether uninteresting to follow this lad's career.

After the weary old sun had taken a last peep at the world about him before going to rest for the night beyond the sea, the schooner dropped her anchor and slowly furled her snow-white sails.

"May I go down to see that vessel, mother?" asked the lad on the doorstep.

"Yes," answered his mother, and off he bounded towards the shore.

Now it appears that when everything was put in order about the schooner's deck, two of her sailors lowered a boat, which hung from davits at her stern, and rowed it quickly to the shore, where they met the lad from the farm-house, who had just slid down the steep bank in front of them.

As the schooner meanwhile swung slowly with the tide, there leaned against the starboard shrouds of her mainmast a short, thickset man; a typical old coaster, too, with his grey homespun trousers and shirt, his leathern belt and black sou'wester; with his grizzled beard and weather-beaten face, his shaved

upper lip and partly shaved chin. His hair was long, and grizzly, too, so that he presented a picture of quaintness if not of good nature.

“Heigh-ho!” he sighed at length; then, taking from his pocket an old clay-pipe which he filled with fresh tobacco and lit, he sat on the bulwark beside him, leisurely crossed his legs and began to puff rolls of strong-smelling smoke skyward.

He grew reminiscent; his mind wandered back to the days of his boyhood. He thought of the happy time he had spent with his widowed mother in their little log-cabin by the shore of the beautiful Bras d’Or, and of his grief, when, at the early age of thirteen, he had to face the world alone; and two large tears, mute tributes to his mother’s memory, left their drouthy sources and rolled down his weather-beaten cheeks, showing that there was a tender chord somewhere in the heart of this quaint old smuggler who had for so many years defied wind and wave, and outwitted the vigilant revenue-officers of the Canadian government. But rough old outlaw that he was, it was not often that he allowed himself to give way to emotion, and it always annoyed him when he did.

“Wal—shiver my timbers!” he said, wiping the tears from his cheeks; then, putting away his pipe, he sang the following snatch from an old sea-song:

“ ‘ Shiver my timbers! What care I
How wild the waves may roar,
Or breakers dash with sudden crash
On distant rocky shore,
On distant rocky shore? ’ ”

The grizzly old sea-dog had a powerful bass voice, although, to look at him, one hardly would have thought so. He could sing, too, having a somewhat extensive repertoire of English and Gaelic come-all-yes. These he sang to a common air which, like a hat-stretcher, he could adjust to suit the requirements of any kind of words or metre. But whenever he felt lonely, as he certainly did now, he never sang a come-all-ye—he either hummed or whistled *Lord MacDonald's Reel*, which was a favourite of his; and now, to drive away a certain lowness of spirits which seemed to depress him, he sang, to an adaptation of the tune of that stirring old reel, the following conglomeration of syllables, keeping time with his foot:

Don-ey-eddle-diddle-eddle-diddle-diddle-um,
 Don-ey-eddle-diddle-eddle-daddle-diddle-um,
 Don-ey-eddle-diddle-eddle-diddle-diddle-um,
 Don-ey-eddle-diddle-eddle-daddle-diddle-um.

Hey-diddle-daddle-diddle,
 Hey-diddle-diddle-um,
 Hey-diddle-daddle-diddle,
 Diddle-daddle-diddle-um ;

Hey-diddle-daddle-diddle,
 Hey-diddle-diddle-um,
 Hey-diddle-daddle-diddle,
 Diddle-daddle-diddle-um.

After repeating this characteristic jumble at least a score of times, each time with increasing speed until he was almost out of breath, he bent his head forward on his breast, stared vacantly at a nail half-driven in the deck, and was soon lost in reverie.

CHAPTER III.

WHERE NICKNAMES ABOUND.

"SEE here, boy," said Gloucester, Hurricane, or Yankee Bob, one of the sailors who had come ashore in the boat, "where can a fellow get some milk?"

"Try that white house near the church," suggested the pretty, brown-eyed boy,—and Hurricane Bob forthwith scrambled up the bank and disappeared.

"Come, sonny, and have a look at the good old *Rob Roy* while Bob is away," proposed the sailor who remained in the boat—a shrewd-looking, reticent, middle-aged man, hailing from a place in Central Cape Breton called Little Frog Pond, and known to seafarers as Foxy or Oyster Donald.

"All right," agreed the lad who forthwith got into the boat which Foxy Donald pushed off, without difficulty, with the butt-end of an oar.

When they got aboard the schooner, Foxy Donald introduced his little barefooted guest to the old smuggler.

"What's your name, sonny?" asked the grizzly old sea-dog.

"Alex —, from Little Village up there," an-

swered the lad, pointing to a group of houses a short distance from the shore.

"Any nickname at all?"

"Only Alex Squire Angus."

"Wal—sonny, you escaped well," declared the old smuggler, "for Cape Breton is the greatest place in the world for nicknames. If it's not Donald the Hawk, it's Squint-eyed Betsie; and if it's not Mamy Duncan the Bleeder, it's Hector Lauchie the Elephant. If Donald is big, they calls him Big Donald; if he's small, they calls him Little Donald; if he's prim, they calls him Fancy Donald; if he spits in his handkerchief, they calls him Donald the Gentleman; and if he has an appetite a little out of the ordinary, ten to one you's'll hear nothing but Hungry Donald, Hungry Donald.

"Now, there was poor **Axe-handle** Angus from Little Frog Pond who used to do some cooperin' in the shape of making axe-handles for some of the Sydney merchants. He stole an ox onct, long, long ago, and sold it to Archy the Brewer for ten gallons of home-made whiskey; and when he came home, after spending three months in jail, instead of calling him **Axe-handle** Angus, they called him **Angus the Ox**; they called his brother, **Donald the Ox**, and his sister, **Nancy the Ox**. Fact, they were all know'd as *The Oxen*. Kind of tough, wasn't it, sonny? And the poor duvils felt so bad that they stopped raisin' oxen, even for their own farm work. But they was always know'd as *The Oxen*, and when you's'd see one of

them comin' half a mile off, you's'd think you ought to hear an ox bellowin'.

"It's strange what has got into the people, for if Angus—anything came here from the Isle of Rum, Scotland, they's'd drop his surname at onct, and call him Angus Rum, for they'd be three or four dozen Anguses' ahead of him whichever part he'd strike. His children 'd be know'd as Donald Angus Rum and Murdoch Angus Rum; his grandchildren, as Johnnie Donald Angus Rum and Archie Murdoch Angus Rum: in fact, it'd be nothing but *Rum*, to at last, if the poor duvil's descendants wouldn't be born with the D. T.'s, they's'd surely die of them; because, after a while, the whole outfit 'd get into the habit of thinkin' that they had a divine right to drink.

"I believe very few escape the nickname contagion: for, 'pon my soul, sonny, if an angel from heaven 'd come down to Cape Breton, some one 'd say, with a wink and a shake of the head, 'Oh, there goes Purty-face Rory—but so proud he is, with yellow feathers sproutin' all over his back!'"

"You better tell Alex about your own nickname, Captain," suggested Oyster Donald; "for it's about as quare a one as uver I heard."

This rather disrespectful suggestion from an inferior caused the old smuggler to cast a somewhat withering glance at his mate, who, feeling that he had perhaps gone a little too far, quietly slipped around the corner of the cabin to the larboard side of the schooner, where he stood watching for Hurricane Bob.

"Wal," drawled the old sea-dog, as soon as Foxy Donald was out of the way, "you's often heared the name daddy-long-legs applied to that overgrow'd mosquitior with all the walkin'-apparatus attached to him?"

"Yes," answered the lad.

"Wal—my nickname beats that all hollow. It's no less than Roderick Donald Angus the Widow Hector Spinnin' Marg'et; for, to make a long story short, I was called Roderick after Cousin Rory Cod Roy; Donald, for distinction, after old Uncle Donald the Lime-kiln; and, bein' Scotch, the Angus was just stuck in whatever.

"Spinnin' Marg'et was my grandmother's nickname, and she got it simple enough. It came about this way. My great-grandfather got in debt to a merchant in Sydney. 'Come and settle,' says the merchant. 'I's'll settle when it suits me,' says my sassy ancestor. 'I's'll take the matter to the courts,' says the pressin' creditor. 'You may take it to the bottomless pits,' says the misbehavin' debtor; and they kept on jawin' each other to the merchant got his back up. Then came a lawyer's letter followed by a writ; the writ, by a judgment; and the judgment, by an execution in the hands of Wabbly Hector, a deputy-sheriff well-know'd in Cape Breton them days.

"They was all away from home except my grandmother when he came lookin' for my great-grandfather's goods, chattels, lands, properties, premises, hereditaments, easements, and appurtenances, which

were always scarce articles in Cape Breton. Fact, sonny, I doubt if my poor misfortunate ancesster uver see'd such a thing as an easement or an appurtenance, much less ownin' one.

"Wal—Wabbly Hector was on horseback, and he left his horse standin' in the yard, and rapped at the kitchen door. 'Good-day,' says my grandmother, who was about twenty-four years of age, 'and what does you's want?' 'I'm the deputy-sheriff,' he says, 'and I want to make a levy.' 'Don't you dare to touch anything,' she says; and she slammed the door in his face. Bein' used to such treatment, he didn't mind this very much, and only dodged into the barn to chase up an easement or two, while my grandmother popped out into the yard with her spinnin'-wheel, which she placed near the horse's head and set a-goin', holdin' a shingle against the spokes. The horse at once cocked his ears, shuddered a little, and then decided it was more dignified to get frightened—and away he went at full gallop. 'What the duvil is the matter?' says the worthy catchpoll, wabblin' out of the cow-stable. 'Oh, my horse is gone,' he says. His horse wasn't the only one that was gone. My grandmother herself disappeared kind of suddenly. But his horse, bein' somewhat tired, didn't go far, and was easy enough ketched and brought back to the barn where it was tied to the hinge of a door and given a feed of my ancesster's best hay.

"Now it appears, sonny, that the execution was for four pounds ten, debt and costs, it bein' pounds,

shillin's and pence they was usin' in Cape Breton them days; and the wabbly sleuth-hound of the law was bound to have the last farthing. So, spyin' a two-year-old bull in a close behind the house, he levied on it, hitchin' one end of a rope to its horns, the other, around the horse's neck. He then throw'd some oats to the hens and geese in the yard, got a bag out of the barn, caught a poor little pig that was squealin' for its dinner in a pen near by, tied it up in the bag, and carried it on his wabbly back to where the horse was tied. He then took a straddle, belonging to my ancestor, off the fence, threw it on his horse, and hung a creel from each side of it."

"What's a straddle, Captain?" asked Alex. "I do not remember ever having seen one."

"A straddle, sonny," the old smuggler explained, "was something like a modern cart-saddle, with a horn on each side of it for hangin' things on. Wal," he continued, "Wabbly Hector then took a wooden crupper about two feet long, stuck it crosswise under the horse's tail, and tied a guy-line to each end of it, fastenin' the guys to the creels on each side of the straddle to keep them from interferin' with the horse's fore feet goin' down hill. Then, after throwin' the pig into one of the creels, he went into the barn, got another bag, and proceeded to exhaust the levyin' power of the execution by swoopin' down on the fowl in the yard: and grabbin' an armful of hens, roosters, geese, and ganders, he throw'd them into the bag which he tied up and chucked into the empty creel;

and then, all out of breath and full of feathers, but happier than a drunken Indian, he unhitched his horse, climbed on its back behind the straddle, and started for Sydney. But his troubles only began when my grandmother set the dog on them, for the bull, bein' stubbornner than Old Nick, boo-ed and bawked, pawed and kicked up dust all the way; as for the pig and the fowl, they behaved themselves in a very uproarious manner.

"Wal—that wabbly sleuth-hound of the law earned his fees that day. But after gettin' in to Sydney at midnight, without any one seein' him, he had a great yarn to tell about my grandmother and her spinnin'-wheel—and that was why they called her Spinnin' Marg'et. My father was called Hector Spinnin' Marg'et, and after his death they styled me on my mother who happened to be his widow—and that was how I came to be called Roderick Donald Angus the Widow Hector Spinnin' Marg'et, so that Oyster Donald wasn't very far astray when he said it was about as quare a nickname as uver he heared."

"I did escape well," said the lad thoughtfully.

"Indeed, and you did!"

CHAPTER IV.

GRADUATION DAY IN BIG FROG POND.

THE pretty, unassuming boy, deeply sympathetic by nature, then listened with the keenest interest to the following brief story of the old smuggler's childhood, told in a characteristic way, without the slightest attempt at effect, but with a quaint pathos which made it fascinating:

"I was born at Big Frog Pond, a well-know'd waterin'-place for horses in Central Cape Breton, right near the Bras d'Or Lakes. My father died when I was very young; fact, I was so young that I don't remember nothing about him. But they are sayin' he was a quare stick whatuver. My mother died, too, when I was only thirteen, so that the little bringin'-up I got, I got it some time or another before that. P'r'aps if poor mother only lived a spell longer, her misbehavin' Roderick Donald Angus wouldn't be the outlaw he is to-day. But she left him at a critical time in life, with no one to look after him or give him good advice, although he got lots later on that he nuver took.

"Mother was a good woman, poor thing! She had

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turrible hard times, though, makin' a livin' for me and herself. But she was niver in debt, poor as she was, although there was many a hard day when they wasn't much to eat in the house. It was only a little log-cabin, sonny, and downstairs was all one room. They was a ladder goin' upstairs to a kind of attic with no such a thing as a window whatuver; and it was up there I used to sleep when I grow'd up a little—on the floor near the stove-pipe that went out through the roof, for mother always slept downstairs when she was at home.

"I was just beginnin' to be a help to mother when she was taken away, poor thing! She used to go around weavin', spinnin', shearin' sheep, washin' wool; and splittin' potatoes for plantin'; and they would be payin' her in wool, cheese, oat-meal, or homespun cloth. She niver got such a thing as cash, for cash was as scarce them days as a red-headed Indian. Wal—sonny, many's the time I wished I was grow'd up so that poor mother wouldn't have to work any longer. But she was taken from me after bein' sick only a few hours, and was buried in the little old buryin'-ground at Big Frog Pond.

"I well remember the day they was diggin' her grave. They went too near Big Duncan the Shark's restin'-place, so that the first thing they know'd, they was into Big Duncan's coffin. There could be no doubt whatuver. The skull had the same old grin that Big Duncan always wore in life, and the same big teeth he used for bitin' the top off of Big Archie

the Hawk's finger. I made them close up Big Duncan's restin'-quarters and dig another grave a little farther away from the one belongin' to Big Duncan, for I wouldn't trust him but he'd bite yet, if he got the chance.

"Wal—sonny, poor mother now rests in the purtiest spot in Cape Breton, on a little hill overlookin' the Bras d'Or Lakes. There's a lot of trees around it, where they are sayin' the birds love to sing all day long. But that is made no difference to her. She is gone away foruver. I hope she is better off where she is, for she didn't get much pleasure here, poor thing!"

At this stage of the narrative the grizzly old smuggler stopped suddenly; then—gazed absently at the western sky from which the glowing light was slowly fading.

Meanwhile Hurricane Bob had returned from the farm-house, and Foxy Donald, who had been watching for him all the while, left the schooner for the shore.

"Where did you go to school, Captain?" Alex asked, after a long and painful pause.

"At Big Frog Pond, sonny," answered the old smuggler, "and I's'll nuver forget the last day I was at school—the day I graduated! Donald Red Sarah was the teacher, and he was old, baldheaded, and cranky. But he had great schoolin'. He was a peculiar sort of man, only one specimen bein' born uvery century to keep the pattern from gettin' lost.

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“Wal—they was a weddin’ at Big Frog Pond the night before. Staggersy Donald’s long-legged Hector was gettin’ married to my cousin, Big Jane Donald the Lime-kiln. Of course the whole country was there, and they had lots of whiskey. So Donald Red Sarah got full, and next day in school he was both cross and sleepy besides bein’ about two-thirds cut.

“Things was goin’ all right to he gave us recess, for after all the scholars went out, he laid his carcass down on a long bench near the door to have a bit of a snooze, and soon fell asleep. I got a cod-line and tied it to one of the end supports of the bench, and when I got outside again, I started in pullin’ the line. It only took me a minute to upset the bench and spill Donald Red Sarah all over the floor. At first he didn’t seem to know what happened, but when he see’d the cod-line attached to the bench, he know’d at onct what was up, and out he came. Wal—you should have seen him. He was the pictur’ of rage. ‘Who done that?’ he growled. ‘Rory Donald Angus,’ a half dozen little duvils of kids says at onct, for they was thinkin’ it was a great joke. But I know’d better—it was no joke for me.

“Wal—as soon as he found out who done the trick, he rang the bell for recess to come in, and *in* all the scholars went but me. ‘Come in here, Rory,’ he says to me. ‘Take your time,’ I says, sassier than Old Nick. ‘You’s’ll ketch it if you don’t,’ he says. ‘I’s’ll ketch it whatuver,’ I says; and I skin’d off for the woods. He made a bee-line after me, and I run’d

into the middle of the brook, thinkin' that he wouldn't want to get his feet wet. But he jumped in after me, grabbed me by the back of the neck, and took me back to the school-house. Wal—the way the teachers them days had of givin' a fellow a bad lickin', was to make him climb on another fellow's back so that they 'd get a better chance at him—and that was the way with me. 'Come up here, Fat Johnnie,' says Donald Red Sarah, Fat Johnnie bein' one of the biggest boys in school; and up poor Fat Johnnie had to come at onct. 'Climb up now,' was the half-drunken fool's next order; and Fat Johnnie bent down, and I climbed up on his back. I know'd what was comin', for it was my graduation day, and Donald Red Sarah was goin' to put me through some Commencement Exercises.

"Wal—the first two cracks of the birch rod knocked Fat Johnnie down on the floor, and the poor fellow got severely licked for not bein' better on his feet. Little Rory Angusie was then called up, and up I got on his back. He was purty good on his feet, too, for a fellow of his size, and managed to hold them until my Commencement Exercises was over. I got an awful poundin'. There wasn't a square inch of my back that wasn't either bleedin' or black. Poor Lame Mary, a kind little girl that had hip-disease, felt so sorry for me that she cried out 'loud. Some of the other scholars were cryin', too, but I was too mad to cry.

"Just then a knock came to the door, and Donald Red Sarah answered it. 'Rory Donald Angus is

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wanted home,' says a kind voice outside. 'He's not goin' home until dinner-time,' growled poor Rory Donald Angus's half-drunken teacher. 'But his mother is sick—not expected to live,' says the same kind voice. Uvery one in the school heard it, and more than one cried out 'loud then. 'He'll go home only when I says he can,' says the brute, slammin' the door in the face of the person that was outside.

"Wal—dinner-time came, and I dragged myself home. But I was too late. Mother was dead. In one way it was p'raps better that I didn't see her, for she nuver know'd that her only boy got such a turrible lickin' the last day he was to school. I wouldn't tell her, even if she was livin' when I got home. But she'd know, I'm sure; I was so badly beaten. . . . So you see, sonny, it isn't much wonder that I'm such an outlaw now."

"Here's the boat," cried Alex, "and I suppose it is about time for me to be getting home."

"Wal—good-bye, sonny," said the old smuggler, grasping the lad's hand firmly, "and be good," he added, with emphasis, "for I'm goin' to ask your father to let you's take a cruise with me to St. Pierre, about the middle of August."

"Thank you," said the lad, his large expressive eyes sparkling with delight.

"Who's goin' with sonny, Skipper?" asked Bob—Yankee Bob.

"You go, Bob," the old sea-dog answered, and Alex was rowed ashore.

That night the pretty lad had happy dreams of the sea, and of the quaint old smuggler, so that his disappointment must have been keen, on looking out of his bedroom window, at daybreak next morning, to find that the schooner had weighed anchor and was gone.

CHAPTER V.

A RIVAL.

YOUNG, handsome, highly-educated, Dr. Edwin Russell was not an altogether unwelcome visitor at Fernwood, the evening before. For Marion was not only disappointed that Colonel Gordon did not come to the Commencement Exercises at Radcliffe, but was considerably hurt that he did not acknowledge the receipt of her letter. She at first thought that his reason for not writing was that he wished to surprise her. But she was wrong in her calculations: and as she had not as yet received his telegram, she had no explanation of what she considered strange conduct towards her; and feeling not a little humiliated, as well as annoyed, was hardly disposed to be reasonable. Besides, both she and her mother—who was a widow with a snug little competence honestly obtained and carefully saved from what might be termed the wreck of her husband's business—had gone to considerable trouble and expense to make the Colonel's visit pleasant. But worst of all, Mrs. Thurlow had told several of her friends that the Colonel was coming—friends who were perhaps a little jealous of Marion, too, and who

annoyed both mother and daughter with questions as to the cause of his absence. These questions were very embarrassing, if not humiliating, for they had no satisfactory explanation to give. Thus it was that when this young Cambridge doctor called to see them that evening, he was by no means an unwelcome visitor, although Marion had only recently met him.

"I was just on my return to the office after making a call, Miss Thurlow," he said, after the usual courtesies were exchanged, "and I dropped in for a minute or two, to congratulate you on the happy occasion of your graduation from Radcliffe, and on so successful a termination of your brilliant course at that institution."

"Thank you," said Marion, blushing deeply, and not a little embarrassed, "it was very kind of you to call."

"Yes, Doctor," added Mrs. Thurlow, "it was very thoughtful on your part."

But just before Dr. Russell's arrival, Marion and her mother had been discussing Colonel Gordon.

"Confound his carelessness and neglect!" was one of the remarks Mrs. Thurlow made.

"There must be some misunderstanding, some mistake, mother," said Marion, "for Colonel Gordon is too much of a gentleman not to have sent some explanation if he could not come."

"How could there be a misunderstanding or a mistake?" Mrs. Thurlow asked, somewhat coldly. "Didn't he say in his letter last Easter that he would

not come East again until you should graduate from Radcliffe? Didn't he ask you very particularly to let him know the time? Didn't you promise to let him know? And didn't you fulfil your promise? But did he fulfill his? He simply did not care. That is the most charitable construction I can put on his conduct, which is as strange as it is annoying, especially in view of all the preparations we made in anticipation of his visit. If he were not at home, there might be some excuse for him, but as it is, there is simply none."

"Perhaps he was unwell, mother," Marion ventured.

"Unwell, my dear! Why, the man was never sick in his life," replied her mother.

"He may have been away from home, mother," Marion again ventured.

"Away from home! Not if I have read his last letter to you correctly."

"Well," said Marion, "I suppose that must be the way with men. They are so selfish anyhow."

"I would not care so much," Mrs. Thurlow went on, raising her eyebrows and adjusting a pair of gold-rimmed glasses on her shapely nose, "only I told the Rands, and the Laytons, and a few others in our set, some of whom, I suspect, are not very friendly, you know; and to-day, Daisy Layton and Rita Rand annoyed me almost beyond endurance with their inquisitiveness about him."

"Something must be wrong with Colonel Gordon," said Marion impatiently, "for I never knew him to act so strangely before."

"There is not the least excuse for him, Marion, my dear; none that I can see."

Although in one way Mrs. Thurlow felt humiliated and annoyed that Colonel Gordon did not come, in another she was delighted; for she was not a little afraid that his liking for Marion and Marion's liking for him, might develop into something more than mere friendship, especially now that there was added to the list of Marion's admirers nearer home, this young doctor from Cambridge, who had a large and growing practice, and for whom Mrs. Thurlow herself, although naturally cold and distant, had shown a strong preference.

A brilliant conversationalist, Dr. Russell, with his subtle kindly wit, his dignified good-hearted drollery, and his inexhaustible fund of anecdote, made the time fly after he took his seat in the parlour at Fernwood. Even Mrs. Thurlow's natural coldness had thawed considerably, and Marion's unhappiness had almost fled. It would have fled, too, had not a messenger come with a very forcible reminder of Colonel Gordon in the shape of a very kind telegram of congratulation and of regret.

Marion blushed a deep crimson as she read this telegram; then, after passing it to her mother, gave Dr. Russell such a pained look that he was afraid some one belonging to her was either very ill or dead.

"No bad news, I hope?" he asked.

"Oh, no," Marion answered, "only a telegram from a very excellent friend of ours in the West whom we

expected here for to-day, but who did not get to come."

"A very excellent friend of *yours*, my young lady," the doctor said to himself.

Just then the clock above the grate struck.

"Half-past nine!" he exclaimed, "which reminds me," he added, "that it is time for me to get back to my office."

"Lots of time!" said Marion.

"Why, yes," Mrs. Thurlow assented. "But Dr. Russell, no doubt, has some professional appointment or other," she then said, turning to her daughter, "so that it would perhaps be unfair to press him to remain longer, much," she added, addressing Dr. Russell himself, "as we enjoy your company."

"Thank you very much," said the doctor. "But, by the way, Miss Thurlow, would you care to go driving with me to-morrow afternoon?"

"I shall be happy to go with you, Dr. Russell."

"About what time would suit you best?"

"Any time from half-past two until four."

"Just pardon me one moment," he said, taking a small note-book from his pocket and turning over its pages rapidly. "Yes," he added, when he had found the place he wanted, "that will suit perfectly," and he made a note of the time. "Of course," he then added, turning to Mrs. Thurlow, "it is understood that you are to accompany us, for our little party would be quite incomplete without you."

"Thank you very, very much," said Mrs. Thurlow,

who was evidently greatly pleased with her daughter's new admirer.

"A very excellent friend of yours in the West, indeed, my fair young lady!" said Dr. Russell to himself as he waited at the next corner for a car. "I shall find out who this very excellent friend of yours is, and shall give him the race of his life. He may have a little start on me. But——"

Just then his car came along, and a minute later Marion's new admirer was on the way to his office.

"I thought there was some mistake, mother," said Marion, after the doctor had gone. "You see Colonel Gordon only got my letter last night, and as his telegram is dated from the capital of Wyoming, to send it he had to travel all the way from Horse Creek to Cheyenne, a distance of sixty miles."

"Aren't you foolish, my dear?" said Mrs. Thurlow. "Why, the very idea! He sent one of his servants in to town with it."

Marion could not see things in that light. Nor could she understand her mother's sudden dislike for the Colonel. But not caring to refer to the matter again, and feeling somewhat tired after the excitement of the day, and not a little disappointed and heart-sick, too, she kissed her mother good-night and retired to her room, where, after turning on the light and pulling down the window blinds, she sat down at her bureau to read at leisure the Colonel's telegram.

"It is dated from Cheyenne," she reasoned with herself, "while my letter was addressed to Horse Creek.

‘Please accept my heartiest congratulations,’” she then read, “‘on the happy occasion of your graduation. . . . I deeply regret not having received your kind invitation until last night, as I should have been most happy to have gone East to be present. . . . to-day. Kindest regards. . . .’ Mother was wrong,” she added; he did ride all the way from Horse Creek to Cheyenne—sixty long, dreary miles in the hot sun—to explain why he could not come.”

These thoughts tended to soothe her wounded feelings. She felt sorry for having spoken unkindly of the Colonel, and then and there she resolved to write—she actually began a long letter to her very excellent friend in the far, far West.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COLONEL GOES A-HUNTING.

"To-NIGHT," said a hard-faced old desperado who sat in front of a camp-fire which burned brightly near the entrance to a log-cabin, built in a secluded mountain retreat of the Laramie range of Wyoming.

"To-night," assented his grizzly companion.

"Then, let's go."

"Afraid it's too early."

"Afraid of a little twilight?" muttered the old desperado. "I'm afraid of nothing now that Old Lightning's dead. Let's go!"

Their plans were fully matured. Each understood the other, and nothing further was said, for strong men speak but little.

It was then about nine o'clock. An hour later the retreat was deserted. The camp-fire burned low, but a few embers still glowed brightly in the chill night wind which was blowing in through a narrow opening in the huge battlements of granite which protected this strange retreat on every side. The retreat itself was not large, for it was only four hundred and fifty feet in length by from fifty to three hundred feet in

width. But it was its unique position that made it so difficult to enter—that made it almost as impregnable, in fact, as the Great Rock of Gibraltar.

Colonel Gordon spent that night at the Great Northern, then the leading hotel in Chevenne. He was a little fatigued after his long ride in the hot sun, and had slept well. But about half-past four next morning, he was awakened by the night clerk who informed him that Sheriff Inkster was downstairs in the office, and was anxious to see him.

"Send him up to my room," the Colonel suggested, and thither the Sheriff was directed.

"Well, Sheriff, what's the trouble?" asked the Colonel, sitting up in bed as soon as Sheriff Inkster entered the room.

"Sorry to disturb you so early," the Sheriff answered, beginning by way of apology; "but it appears that the old gang are venturing south again, now that your father is dead, and are beginning their old work. For only an hour ago, I received word by wire that at about two o'clock this morning a couple of masked men held up the west-bound Overland Limited about two miles east of Buford, robbing the express car and getting away with about sixty thousand dollars. But to get down to business, Colonel: I came up here to find out if you'll lead a posse in pursuit of the gang. You're the best scout in the State, that is," he added, "if you're anything like Old Lightning."

"Are you going yourself?" asked the Colonel.

"Of course," answered the Sheriff.

"Well, how many men have you got?"

"Six, Colonel, six besides myself—Dick Harvey, Shoshone Williams, Jo Rice, Jack Kendall, Antelope Harry, and Big Horn Billy—all good men. Coming?"

A man with the fighting blood of Lightning Gordon coursing through his veins could only give one answer, and that answer was—

"Yes. Tell the hotel clerk to order my horse, Sheriff; get the Union Pacific people to have a special ready to take the whole outfit to Buford at once, horses and all; have a good Winchester ready for me, and I shall meet you at the station any time you say."

"Five-thirty."

"All right," said the Colonel, and the Sheriff left the room.

At five o'clock Colonel Gordon rode to the Union Pacific station, where a west-bound freight had been converted into a special, to superintend the loading of the horses; and at half-past five, Special 213 pulled out in charge of Division-Superintendent Alton.

To prevent communication with Cheyenne from Buford, which was only twenty-seven miles away, the road agents cut the telegraph wires, so that after the hold-up, the Overland Limited, in order to communicate with headquarters, had to back eastward six miles, as far as Granite Canyon, where it was held until the arrival of Special 213. It did not have long to wait, however, for within forty minutes after leaving Cheyenne, Special 213 pulled into Granite Canyon station.

After making careful enquiries, Colonel Gordon found that the hold-up was not a very unusual one. A red light on the track, a safe blown open, and sixty thousand dollars stolen by two masked men, armed to the teeth, who disappeared in the darkness, were all the facts the trained scout could gather from the several versions of the affair told by the conductor, engineer, fireman, express messenger, and forward brakeman of the delayed train.

"Any shots fired in defence?" the Colonel asked.

"One with a Winchester," answered the conductor, "by an old Texas Ranger, at an object he thought he saw moving in the darkness, on a little rising north of the track."

"Well," said the Colonel, "that will do."

"Satisfied that none of the passengers had a hand in the affair, Colonel?" asked the 'Sheriff.

"Satisfied," was the Colonel's answer.

And the Overland Limited moved on westward with Colonel Gordon on board, Special 213 following ten minutes behind.

"Let me off where the passenger fired at the moving object, conductor," said the Colonel.

"All right," assented the conductor, who stopped the train at the very spot.

When Special 213 came up, Mr. Alton asked if there was anything further he could do to assist.

"Nothing, thank you," answered the Colonel.

The Overland Limited then continued westward.

While the horses on Special 213 were being un-

loaded, the Colonel proceeded to examine the spot where the moving object was last seen; and half concealed behind a little clump of sage-brush, he found a middle-aged man with long grizzly hair, lying in a pool of clotted blood. The shot fired by the old Texas Ranger at the object he saw moving in the darkness, had not been in vain.

"Hello!" said the Colonel, bending over the victim of the Ranger's bullet.

"Oh-h-h!" moaned the dying desperado, who, taking the Colonel for his illustrious dead father, trembled from head to foot with terror. "I thought—you—wus dead," he then muttered, "f'r—no one—but—Old Lightning—could ketch—Old Dynamite—Dynamite Jim," he explained, "even with a gun."

"Poor fellow," said the Colonel, with the restrained emotion of a strong man.

"Don't *poor-fellow* me!" hissed the old outlaw on whose head there was a price of fifteen thousand dollars.

"You're still the same brute you were all your life," was the Colonel's retort, which seemed to please Old Dynamite greatly, "but you're a very noble sort of brute. Now, who was with you at this last game?"

"Who wus—with me?" muttered the outlaw. "Lightning Gordon—don't—seem to know—Dynamite Jim—yit!"

"But your partner didn't use you right. He shouldn't have left you here."

"He should—because—I told him t'. 'I'm hit—in

the stomach,' I sez. 'Come, Jim,' he sez, 'and I'll—take you.' 'No—you won't,' I sez, 'so go. F'r Old Dynamite—c'n die game.' Now—watch him die."

"Who was this partner of yours?"

"Old Dynamite—never squeals," groaned the grizzly old desperado. "He—c'n die—game!"

And with a blood-stained hand from which three fingers were missing, he made a feeble attempt to take a revolver from his belt.

"It's no use, Jim," said Colonel Gordon, snatching the revolver.

"I know—it's—no use," the old outlaw replied, "but I'd like—to have one shot—at Old Lightning—before I cash in."

But his wish was not gratified. Old Lightning was—and was not there. He was not there as he was in the flesh, but he was there in the person of his only son, flesh of his flesh and blood of his blood, who was as much like him as it was possible for one man to be like another.

"But I'm not Old Lightning," said the Colonel. "I'm his son."

"You can't fool—Dynamite Jim. There was only—one specimen—and you're it."

"Old Dynamite," the Colonel then began—

"Old Lightning," muttered the grizzly old desperado, and with a vacant stare in his glassy eyes, he shuddered, and then—died.

As soon as he was dead, Colonel Gordon returned

to the railway track where his men had just finished unloading the horses.

Old Dynamite's remains were placed in the empty car, and fifteen minutes later Special 213 was on its way back to Cheyenne.

CHAPTER VII.

OLD BUCKEYE.

LISTLESSLY inactive, the posse remained at the scene of the hold-up all day long. Colonel Gordon was characteristically reticent, and there was considerable uneasiness among the men, so that when evening came without a move having been made, Sheriff Inkster, who happened to be with Shoshone Williams at the time, began to grumble exceedingly.

"I'm getting tired of this cussed waiting," he said, "and I'm beginning to get afraid I made a mistake in giving the Colonel charge of the outfit. At any rate, he doesn't seem to have much of Old Lightning's blood in him."

"Dunno," replied Williams, who served under General Gordon in the Indian wars. "Guess he knows what he's doin'."

"He's acting cussed slow anyhow," rejoined the Sheriff.

"I heared th' same thing said 'bout Ol' Lightnin', Sheriff, but in less than an hour after th' remark was made, th' man that made it was up against a pace he

wasn't used t'; and I'm much mistaken if you won't find Cliff's a chip off th' ol' block."

Shoshone Williams was right, for less than half an hour after sunset, Colonel Gordon ordered the posse to get their horses and then follow him; and the pace he set, as he rushed northward in the darkness, was terrific. Rough ground, rolling prairie, creeks, sagebrush, rocks, were all the same to him, as on, on, on, he pressed to his destination, guided, not so much by the stars, and the lay of the land, with which he was perfectly familiar, as by that indefinable sixth sense he seemed to possess—the unerring instinct of the experienced scout and plainsman. On, on, on, he dashed, silent, watchful, determined, until he reached the mouth of a wild-looking, wide-mouthed canyon, about thirty miles north of the railway. He then ordered the posse to dismount, gave the froth-covered horses in charge of Dick Harvey, and proceeded stealthily along one side of the canyon. When he had thus gone about two miles, he began to ascend, with the utmost caution, the steep side of Devil's Peak. For he alone knew where the robbers' retreat was, he alone knew the way thither, and he alone knew that if he did not reach it before daylight, he was leading his men into the gaping jaws of death from which there was absolutely no escape. The task required nerve, but he was Old Lightning's son; and up, up, still up, he pressed, followed by his faithful men, until he came within sight of the entrance to the famous retreat. He then got down on his hands and knees, and proceeded to

crawl the rest of the way ; and although the entrance was only three hundred yards distant, it took nearly two hours to cover the intervening space.

With hands and knees more or less mangled and bleeding, the posse took up their position below the entrance to the retreat, and there they lay, prostrate on their faces, to await the dawn.

Colonel Gordon was a little in advance ; and on his right lay Sheriff Inkster, Jo Rice, and Jack Kendall, while on his left were Shoshone Williams, Antelope Harry, and Big Horn Billy.

When daylight came, they could plainly see the top of the robbers' log-cabin.

"Now, remember, boys," was the last whispered advice of the Colonel, "that no life must be taken unless it be absolutely necessary to our safety."

At earliest dawn, Old Dynamite's hard-faced old companion in crime awoke, and looked wildly about the cabin. A more fierce-looking desperado it would be impossible to imagine, with his long grizzly hair, scraggy beard, black hawk-like eyes, and pox-marked face, furrowed with wrinkles and blackened with powder-marks. He was very thirsty after his long ride, and getting up from his couch, caught up a small drinking-cup and opened the cabin door. But as he was about to go out, the instinct of the wild animal seemed to warn him of danger. He stepped back, took from his couch his belt of revolvers, which he buckled around his waist, and then emerged from his

cabin, dashing across the retreat to the far end where there was a little spring.

"Death or surrender!" rang from the entrance, as Colonel Gordon and his men sprang to their feet with levelled rifles.

Old Buckeye dropped his drinking-cup, took both revolvers from his belt while turning around, and would have fired had he not found himself face to face with seven Winchesters aimed directly at his heart. But it was not so much the seven rifles that awed him, ready as they were to belch forth instant death, as the strong man who stood a little in advance of the group.

"It's Old Lightning himself," he muttered, trembling from head to foot with terror, for he, too, believed that if the old General were actually dead, he must have come back to life again.

"Surrender!" demanded Colonel Gordon. "Surrender or die!"

"It's Old Lightning sure," groaned the outlaw, dropping his revolvers; and Old Buckeye, demon of the mountains, terror of the plains—the nervy, reckless, crafty, blood-thirsty desperado on whose head was an aggregate price of sixty thousand dollars—threw up his hands in unconditional surrender.

"Didn't I tell you?" said Shoshone Williams, nudging Sheriff Inkster.

"You did," acknowledged the Sheriff, not a little ashamed of the disparaging remarks he had made about Colonel Gordon the evening before.

Old Buckeye was handcuffed, his cabin was searched, the lost money was recovered, and early that afternoon the posse began their journey back to the railway.

Buford reached, a train was sent for. The same special was again pressed into service, and before midnight Old Buckeye found himself behind the strong bars of the Cheyenne jail where he was imprisoned until, some weeks later, having been found guilty of murder in the first degree, he was hanged—a fate merited by a scarlet record of twenty-three murders and seventeen train-robberies, and met with the same unflinching nerve which had always characterized him.

CHAPTER VIII.

LITTLE VILLAGE BY THE SEA.

BEAUTIFULLY situated on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Little Village had one general store, a church, a school-house, a forge, a post-office, a tailor-shop, and a grog-shop. Six miles farther north was a rather prosperous sea-board settlement known as Ghost Brook, whose people followed the avocations of farming and fishing, and, as a general rule, were well-to-do.

There was considerable bitterness of feeling between the aristocrats of Ghost Brook and the élite of Little Village, for the former were always accusing the latter of looking down on them. This accusation, as a matter of fact, was more or less true, for some of the people of Little Village did look upon the people of Ghost Brook as an aggregation of rowdies. Nor was this without reason, for scarcely a week passed without four or five Ghost Brook ruffians coming in to Little Village and getting drunk. They nearly always came in groups, and instead of going home at reasonable hours, would usually hang around until after dark, and then drive furiously backward and forward

through Little Village, yelling like madmen all the while.

Big Duncan the Bully lived there, and at one time was a source of constant terror not only to the people of Little Village but to the people of Ghost Brook as well. A powerful man physically, he would fight on the least provocation. Nor would he relent when he had won a victory, but would persist in fighting an opponent to the very death unless influenced away or taken away by force. Strong men came from far and near to meet him, but he was always victorious.

There was, possibly, only one man in Cape Breton who was his equal, and that was his younger brother, Big Rory the Bully. Many seemed to think that Big Rory was his superior, but Big Rory, knowing his brother's brutal nature, and being a little afraid of him on that account, always acknowledged him to be superior, and thus prevented a conflict.

Big Duncan at length came to grief. At the Bend of Petitcodiac, in the Province of New Brunswick, he met a stalwart Irish lumberman of the name of Dublin Pat at whose hands he received a merciless thrashing; and although he was then getting a little old and could not reasonably expect to win always, he felt his defeat so keenly that he wept.

"Wait you," were his last words to Dublin Pat as he left the Bend for Cape Breton, "I have a brother, younger than me, who will thrash you yet."

He came home broken-hearted, and died within a month; and the very next day after his funeral, the

avenger of his defeat set out on foot for New Brunswick.

Big Rory had but one aim, that of meeting Dublin Pat; one fear, that the stalwart Irishman would be gone before he should be able to reach the Bend. But he was not disappointed, when, at the end of a week, he arrived at the camp where Dublin Pat boarded.

"You know'd Big Duncan the Bully?" he said, laying his hand on the Irishman's shoulder.

"Shure and I did," answered Pat, "and a gr-reat blow-hard he was."

"Well," said Rory, "I am his brother," and so saying he caught Dublin Pat by the collar and dragged him out of the camp.

Some of Pat's friends wanted to interfere in his behalf, but Pat good-naturedly informed them that he could take care of himself, and they desisted.

Big Rory the Bully and Dublin Pat, both men of powerful physique, then stripped for the combat. They appeared to be very evenly matched, and each went at the other fiercely. There were no such modern refinements as boxing-gloves and Marquis of Queensbury rules; there was not even an official time-keeper, and consequently no regular rounds: but, like two evenly matched roosters in a barn-yard contest, they kept their own time, fighting until they were out of breath, then resting until they had sufficiently recuperated to resume the deadly struggle.

At the end of the first hour both were horribly bruised and marked, and bled freely from head and

body. Nearly all their clothes were torn off, and they were covered with froth and blood; still, they boxed, and clinched, and wrestled, and struggled, but neither could claim a victory. Dublin Pat's friends soon began to fear that their favourite would ultimately be beaten, and tried to stop the fight; but the plucky Irishman would not desist until he felt that he was beaten. As for Big Rory, he fought with a savage persistence which only death could conquer.

Dublin Pat was several years older than Big Rory, and it soon became evident that he was weakening. He realized this himself, and gladly would have desisted only he was too plucky to acknowledge defeat. He therefore fought with the desperation of despair. Big Rory, on the other hand, showed no signs of weakening; and although he had received more punishment than his opponent, he was a younger man, had a better heart and better recuperative power, and was therefore better able to withstand punishment. He fought with the same grim, dogged persistence, until, at length, after a fierce and bloody struggle which lasted nearly an hour and a half, he succeeded in landing a terrific blow over his opponent's weakening heart—a blow directed with that savage fierceness which characterized his every action throughout the fight—a blow which immediately knocked his powerful antagonist down and out.

Big Rory the Bully's mission was now ended. He said nothing, picked up his grey homespun coat and waistcoat, put them on again, and, after wash-

ing the blood from his hands and face at a brook near by, left at once for home with a look of savage satisfaction on his horribly-marked, blood-stained face. When he arrived at Ghost Brook, two weeks later, there was a great gathering of friends in his honour. But he soon disgusted them with his noisy boasting and savage insolence. The gathering broke up in a fight, and he soon became more of a terror to the people of Ghost Brook than ever his brother had been.

Now it happened that one fine afternoon about the end of July, as Archie the Widow Donald, one of the rising young farmers of Little Village, was on his way to the post-office, he encountered a fellow from Ghost Brook of the name of Lippy Donald, so called as much on account of his insolence as on account of the size of his lips.

This Ghost Brook ruffian had been drinking, and was accompanied by two other rowdies almost as insolent as himself.

"I got my gang," he said, going up to Archie. "So make it on me now, you son of a hell," and he gave a long, loud roar.

"Make what on you?" asked Archie.

"Make it on me now, you son of a hell," was Lippy Donald's answer which he accompanied with another roar, louder if anything than the first.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean for you to make it on me now, you son of a hell, if you are looking for fight."

"I wouldn't be bothered with the likes of you,"

said Archie with contempt. "You are not worth while, you crabbed little Ghost Brooker, for about all you can do is to squeal."

"But there is one in Ghost Brook that'll make you run, you son of a hell," replied Lippy Donald.

"Who is that?" Archie asked, somewhat sharply, for he was a little nettled.

"Big Rory—Big Rory the Bully," answered Lippy Donald, "the one that thrashed the Bully of New Brunswick up at Petitco-diac last winter."

"Well," said Archie, "I wouldn't run from the best man you've got in Ghost Brook."

He then left the ruffian trio, and proceeded on his way to the post-office.

Lippy Donald was a noted mischief-maker, and feeling not a little hurt because of the contempt with which Archie had treated him, he resolved to bring about a fight between Big Rory and this young man who, he claimed, had insulted him.

The Widow Donald's son was very young, having scarcely attained the age of twenty-one. But he was active and wiry; he had always taken good care of himself, so that if he and the Ghost Brook bully ever came into conflict, there would be a fight such as had not been seen in Cape Breton for many a day.

CHAPTER IX.

GRANDFATHER.

ABOUT three o'clock, that same afternoon, a schooner loomed up on the Gulf, ten or twelve miles to the northeast.

"The *Rob Roy!*" guessed Alex, who saw her almost as soon as she appeared.

"Perhaps it is," said his father, who might be regarded as the leading citizen of Little Village, for besides being its only merchant, Squire Angus was a road overseer, a school trustee, a churchwarden, and a justice of the peace.

A fresh breeze was blowing from the northeast at the time, and onward the schooner came, under full sail, throwing up a roll of foam on each side of her bow, and leaving a foam-edged, serpentine streak in her wake. When she came opposite Little Village, her sails were lowered, and her anchor was dropped. Three men then hurried to and fro about her deck, and when they had put things in order, they went below.

About an hour afterwards there appeared on her deck a short, thickset man, who, with his good-

natured sun-browned face, grizzly beard, and black sou'wester, could be none other than Captain Roderick, hated by those officials of the government through whose hands he was always slipping, but loved by those who knew him best for his quaint, kindly ways.

He had been engaged in the smuggling-trade for the greater part of his life, and had been very successful, his success being as much due to an inborn shrewdness as to the fact that he ran no unnecessary risks. When he could safely do so, he made quarterly trips to St. Pierre each year, and spent the intervening space of time in the coasting-trade, picking up an odd cargo at Halifax for merchants doing business in small seaports along the west and south shores of Cape Breton. But as the coasting trade was now dull, and a great many schooners were idle, he decided to pass the time hovering around until the middle of August, the time he had chosen for his second trip that season. Nor was his choice of the middle of August an unwise one, for it was a time of the dark of the moon, and darkness is the best natural ally of the law-breaker; and as his first trip had been a very profitable one, he had no cause for worry, and therefore decided not to place either himself or the good old schooner in unnecessary peril.

Having dressed in his best clothes to call on old friends in Little Village, he lowered the boat and rowed it ashore alone. After landing, he scrambled up the steep bank in front of him, and then leisurely strolled along the bridle-way towards the village

which was only a little distance away. Just as he was coming up to the post-road, a carriage, containing two men, came along from the south, and stopped a few score feet from where he was.

"You mustn't get out here," said the driver; "I'll go all the ways up to the house."

"Tut, tut," protested the venerable, aged-looking Scotsman who was with him. "Turn back here, for you have come far enough. Indeed, I am very grateful for your kindness in coming this far. Besides," the old man added, "I need a little exercise to supple me out."

He then got out of the carriage.

"Good-bye, Grandfather," said the driver, turning back.

"Good-bye, my boy, and good luck to you," returned the Scotsman, who then leisurely proceeded on his way.

This venerable old pioneer must have been a splendid specimen of manhood in his prime, for he was of massive build, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, and stood over six feet in height. Ninety-three winters had whitened his hair, but could not dim the brightness of his dark-brown eyes, nor take the elasticity from his sprightly step. It was little wonder, too, that in his youth he should have been nicknamed *Straight Angie*, for even at his advanced age he was as straight as the proverbial rush. But he was no longer known as *Straight Angie*; he was loved too well. Time itself seemed to have thrown a halo

around him. He was Alex's grandfather by the ties of blood-relationship, but by the ties of affection he was a grandfather to all who knew him, and it was as Grandfather he was known.

He had two daughters, Mary and Catherine: Catherine had married Squire Angus; Mary, Angus the Horse-trader, a prosperous farmer who lived about two miles south of Little Village. Although he resided with Catherine, he visited Mary nearly every morning, and was now on his way home after having spent most of the day with her.

When he and Captain Roderick met, there was an old-time greeting.

"Will you's have a drink of Scotch?" the old smuggler asked.

"Don't mind if I do," said Grandfather. "What kind have you got?"

"Usher's Black Label," answered Captain Roderick, suggesting, by a sign, that they should go behind the Squire's shop, for there were some people standing in front of it who would see them if they took a drink where they were.

"No—!" said the old Scotsman firmly, his dark eyes flashing fiercely, "I never went behind anybody's back in my life to take a drink, and I am too old now to begin."

When the old smuggler produced the flask, Grandfather held it up so that every one could see it.

"Here's to your good health, Captain," he said, "and may the day never come when a Scotsman will

be afraid to take a drink of good, honest old Scotch whiskey in public."

"Drink hearty," the old smuggler enjoined.

And Grandfather fully complied with the terms of the injunction.

"Was I uver tellin' you's about the hard times I got in Halifax onct?" Captain Roderick then asked.

"No," Grandfather answered. "Let us hear about it, Captain."

"Wal," said the old smuggler, "I was doin' some boozin' there one day with some old cronies, and didn't get back to the schooner until late at night. About half-past eleven I was feelin' awful bad, so I decided to get more whiskey, for there was none in the vessel. I didn't go far along Lower Water Street, howuwer, when I met Sweepstakes Billy, a policeman well-know'd in Halifax them days. 'Where are you's goin' this time of the night?' he says. 'Wal—Billy,' I says, 'I'm in a duvil of a predicament. Can't you's help a poor duvil out?' 'What can I do for you's?' he says. 'Wal,' I says, 'I'm turrible bad off for a drink. Where can I get one?' 'You go down to the Bluenose Hotel on Hollis Street,' he says, 'see the proprietor,' he says, 'tell him who sent you, and he's'll use you all right.' Wal—I went down to the Bluenose, which was then one of the leadin' hotels in the city; I interviewed the proprietor, and I told him who sent me and what I wanted. 'I'm afraid it's after hours,' he says, pullin' out his watch, 'for you know Halifax is a high-license city.' 'That is make no dif-

ference,' I says; 'I can drink after hours.' 'Where are you's from?' he then says. 'From Cape Breton, of course,' I says at onct, thinkin' that 'd fetch him sure. 'Wal,' he says, turnin' up his nose and fairly snuffin' in my face, 'you's won't get any whatuver.' But wasn't I mad! I must have raised the temperature four or five degrees in that well-know'd hotel. Just think on refusin' to sell a man a drink because he was from Cape Breton! Wal—I looked him straight in the face, for I wasn't owin' him anything, and I says to him: 'You poor misfortunate fellow,' I says, 'you's can go straight to the bottomless pits, for the day will come when a Cape Bretoner will get a drink in Halifax.'"

"The day will come, Captain; the day will come!"

"Wal—here's to your good health, Grandfather," was the old smuggler's toast, "and may the day nuver come when a Cape Bretoner 'll be stuck for a drink in Halifax or anywhere else—in Halifax whatuver," he added with special emphasis.

"Drink hearty," said the old Scotsman.

And Captain Roderick took a copious draught.

"Wal," he said, with characteristic quaintness, as he replaced the flask in his pocket, "Scotch whiskey is good for anything from corns to dander."

This bit of comment made Grandfather laugh heartily.

"You're the same droll fellow, Captain," he said. "Come up to the house."

CHAPTER X.

THE SMUGGLER'S DREAM.

SQUIRE ANGUS and his wife happened to be standing in the front door when Grandfather came along with the old smuggler.

"You are just in time for our mowing-frolic to-morrow, Captain," said the Squire's wife, "and we shall be glad to have you come with your crew."

"Thank you's for the bid," said the old salt whose broad smile showed how pleased he was at being invited.

He was then asked to tea, after which he volunteered to go with the Squire and Alex to catch a sheep which had to be killed for the festivities of the morrow. Before leaving the house, however, he got the Squire's consent to Alex's going to St. Pierre with him about the middle of August.

Rope in hand, the happy lad then led the way over a low range of hills, east of the house, to the sheep-pasture, some parts of which were thickly covered with a second-growth of juniper and spruce. It sloped towards the west, and at the lowest corner a

pen had been constructed for catching the sheep, which they found quietly feeding in a small open field a few hundred yards from the corner.

Alex went cautiously around to the end of the field, Captain Roderick remained at the lower side, and Squire Angus stationed himself midway between the two. They then began to close in slowly. The sheep saw them, stopped feeding, stood facing them for a moment, then, turning about, ran towards the corner, stopping within a hundred yards of the pen. A few remained feeding; the rest stood, looking back. Their pursuers slowly closed in, and the sheep, seeing that they were again pursued, again faced their pursuers. One sheep made a bold dash out of the group, but Captain Roderick succeeded in turning it back. Another made an attempt to escape along the fence at the lower side, but it, too, was prevented from escaping by the old smuggler who seemed to have had considerable experience in the handling of sheep.

The day had been warm, and the sheep, having fed all the afternoon in the hot sun, were languid, and did not seem anxious for a chase. Noticing this, Alex closed in a little nearer, as did his father; and one sheep, after hesitating some little time at the entrance, was bold enough to enter the pen—and the rest followed with a run. Their pursuers then closed in slowly, and barred the entrance. Two or three of the wildest tried to jump out when they found themselves captives, only to learn that the pen was too high to enable them to escape.

A large white wether was then caught, and after Captain Roderick—having first felt its ribs—had pronounced it fit to kill, its legs were securely bound together, the poles at the entrance to the pen were taken down, and Alex was sent home for the horse and cart.

“Well, Captain,” said the Squire, sitting down on the grass, after Alex had gone, “I’ll likely be very busy to-morrow between everything, and I am going to ask you to do something for me.”

“What’s that?” asked the old smuggler.

“Well,” answered the Squire, “I got a little whiskey in Big Village this morning, and I want you to take charge of distributing it around.”

“All right,” said the old sea-dog. “But I can’t help thinkin’ of the last time I was master of ceremonies at a mowin’-frolic. It was at Big Frog Pond. The day was turrible hot, and the frolickers was drinkin’ lots of whiskey, and lots of water. Fact, they kept me so busy that I was nearly run’d off my feet. Wal—after dinner I went around to give them all a drink, and as I was feelin’ a little tired, I sat down on a pile of dead wood in which they was a wasp’s nest; fact, I sat purty darn near the nest itself.

“Wal—some of the frolickers see’d my perilous position, and began hollerin’ at me to look out. ‘I’m lookin’ out,’ I says. ‘There’s something there that ’ll make you hop,’ they says. ‘Th’s nothing in Cape Breton that ’ll me hop outside of Scotch whiskey,’ I says. ‘All right,’ they says, ‘you’s can suffer the

consequences.' Wal—I was feelin' so drowsy, I soon fell asleep; and talk about your dreams, I had the funniest dream you's uver heard tell of in all your life."

"What was it about, Captain?"

"About!" repeated the old smuggler. "Why, I dreamt that I had so far forgotten myself as to decide to get married: fact, I was actually leadin' me bride up the aisle of the Big Frog Pond church, keepin' step to the wail of Mendelssohn's well-know'd *Funeral Parade* or *The Bridegroom's Finish*—and the church was crowded to the attic with women. Sure, all the old hens in Big Frog Pond was there, and I heard all kinds of remarks about the poor misfortunate girl and myself. 'Oh, ain't she purty?' says one. 'It's a wonder she uver had that old duvil.' 'Wal—she didn't get him yet,' I kept sayin' to myself. 'Indeed and indeed,' says another, 'she's the fool whatever.' 'Wal—the poor silly young fool, havin' anything to with Captain Roderick,' says a third. 'Wal,' says a fourth, stickin' up for me a considerable, 'I doesn't think she's gettin' a bad match whatever.' 'The old duvil!' says the third, with an ugly grin on her old and well-know'd face; 'I'd rather marry Old Nick,' she says. 'Thanks be, it's not any of my daughters he's gettin',' she says. 'Wal,' says the fourth, 'she might fare a great deal worse.' 'I wonder who made her dress,' says another, eyin' me victim carefully. 'Search me,' says a sixth, 'but one thing I know,' she says; 'it's a poor fit whatever.'

'Ain't she pale?' says another. 'I thought she was better-lookin'.'

"Wal—amid such murmurs of admiration, we marched along the aisle to we got up to where old Donald the Magistrate was officiatin'. 'How the duvil did you get in here?' I says, considerably surprised at findin' him where he was. 'I got in by the door,' he says, sassy enough, too. 'Wal—before you's start in this business, Donald,' I says, 'I want to ask you one question: Are you's a regularly ordained clergyman of any religious denomination?' 'Wal—no,' he says, 'I'm not, but I'm a regularly appointed justice of the peace.' 'Wal,' I says, 'before this proceedin' goes ahead any further, I wish to take the preliminary objection that by the laws of the Province of Nova Scotia you's are not a fit and proper person to solemnize marriage. That's all,' I says. 'Now, Smuggler, dearie,' says me bride-elect, 'don't get excited.' 'Th's no fear,' I says; but I didn't like the idea of bein' called 'Smuggler, dearie,' one bit, though I didn't say nothing. But down around Big Frog Pond, let me tell you, the boys has got into the unbecomin' habit of serenadin' bridal couples, and at this juncture the serenadin' began outside with *bang, bang, bang!* from a dozen muzzle-loadin' shot-guns, and old muskets, and flint-locks. It was simply deefenin'; I thought I was in the Crimean war—at the siege of Sebastopol. The women, of course, began to scream—and such screamin', I niver heard the likes before.

"Wal—the boys outside had to re-load their weap-

ons of war, and the women had to get their breath, so the ceremony proceeded. 'Note my objection, Donald,' I says to the magistrate. 'Oh, nuver mind, Smuggler, darling,' says me little fool; 'he'll do, dearest.' Wal—I must have been the pictur' of rage after gettin' beslobbered with such affectionate epithets. 'But this is no valid marriage,' I kept sayin' under my breath, for I was tryin' to look as pleasant as I possibly could. 'I am the victim of fraud or undue influence of some kind or other, to so far forget myself as to think of gettin' married—by civil process of all processes!' I says. And only I consoled myself with the thought that such a marriage would be invalid, or that some of the boys outside might shoot me by accident before the ceremony was over, I'd have fainted and would have to be carried out of the church to the Lohengrin wail of my poor, broken-hearted, little, prospective bride.

"Wal—Donald began by askin' me if I'd take Flora Ann Donald the Mail-driver to be my wife. 'Ask Flora Ann herself first,' I says. 'Now, Smuggler, dearest,' says the sassy bride-elect, 'don't you dare to call the likes of me Flora Ann whatuver. Why, Annie's my name,' she says, and the whole congregation bu'sted out laughin'. 'Stop this laughin',' says the ruffled magistrate, and they shut up at onct.

"Just then, howuver, the duvils outside resumed their duvilment, much to my delight, for I was feelin' like a criminal on the gallows. with a black hood over

my face and a rope around my neck, until the boys came to my rescue by resumin' the attack.

"It was truly splendid, that hour of battle, for the screamin' of the women had to mingle with the thunders of the musketry, the groans of the magistrate, and the sighs of the victim. Then came a few moments of silence, deep as the bottomless pits, and the boldest held his whiskey-coated breath while a dirty-faced urchin was openin' one of the side windows. He was a good-hearted little duvil, too, for as soon as he got the window opened, he says with tears in his eyes, 'You have my sympathy, Captain, old boy!' 'Thank you,' I says. But talk about your hisses, I thought the audience had suddenly been converted into a mixture of snakes and geese.

"Wal—when quiet was again restored, Donald the Magistrate asked Flora Ann if she'd take me for a husband. 'Sure,' she says. 'Now, Smuggler, old boy,' she says, 'be smart.' But I was mad enough to bite, though I didn't say nothing, for I know'd well enough that my time was comin'. And when he asked me again if I'd take Flora Ann for a wife, 'No!' I says. 'To the bottomless pits with Annie Donald the Mail-driver, and all the other Annas and Annies and Flora Anns of Big Frog Pond.' And I made a bee-line for the door amid cheers, and shouts, and volleys of musketry.

"But the women in the church didn't take as kindly to my action as did the duvils outside. 'The traitor,' says one. 'The coward,' says another. 'The destroyer

of an orphan's happiness,' says a third—and that was the sassy orphan! 'Oh, the poor little girl!' says a fourth. 'The brute, the brute,' a lean-lookin' old maid bawls out. 'Let us lynch him,' she says; and after lockin' the church door, they made a charge at me with hat-pins. 'Look out,' I says, standin' at bay, 'for I'll kick like a mule if you's 'll come too near.' But somehow or another the poor, rejected, though sassy, bride-elect sneaked up behind me and run'd her hat-pin full length into my neck. Of course I woke up with the pain, and what did I find but a wasp exercisin' her little hat-pin on the back of my neck. Up I jumped. But as soon as I did, all the wasps were set free, for I had been practically settin' on their nest. And they made at me. . . . Wal—I was glad I woke up whatuver, for as bad as wasps is, they is nothing to bein' stabbed to death with hat-pins for not marryin' a sassy little Big Frog Ponder."

"Well, Captain," commented the serious-minded Squire, "it was, indeed, a somewhat remarkable dream."

They then proceeded to discuss some of the incidents that went to make it up.

Alex soon returned with the horse and cart; and when he did, the wether was taken to the barn where it was locked up for the night.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MOWING FROLIC.

LIPPY DONALD was up at four o'clock next morning, and so bent was he on making trouble for Archie the Widow Donald that he at once repaired to Big Rory the Bully's without even taking his breakfast. As a matter of fact, he would have gone the night before, only he was so drunk that he had to be carried home by the two rowdies who accompanied him. But he was in good time, for he found the Ghost Brook Bully at home.

"What's up when you came over here this early, Donald?" said Big Rory, who suspected that something of very great importance must have occurred; otherwise, Lippy Donald would not have been on the move so early.

"Well, Bully, if you only heard what I did in Little Village yesterday, you wouldn't be wondering what brought me here so early."

"Well, what's up?" Big Rory asked, somewhat sharply.

"They think they have a great bully in Little Village now," answered Lippy Donald.

"And who is he?"

"Archie the Widow Donald, the son of a hell."

"The overgrown calf," interrupted the bully.

"I saw him yesterday," continued the mischief-maker, "and he was making fun of the Ghost Brookers. 'But there is one in Ghost Brook that 'll make you run, you son of a hell,' I says. 'Who is that?' he says. 'Big Rory the Bully,' I says, 'the one that thrashed the Bully of New Brunswick up at Petitcodiac last winter.' 'Well,' he says, 'I wouldn't run from the best man you've got in Ghost Brook.' Hadn't he the gall of the devil?" he then added by way of comment, thinking that Big Rory had ample provocation to fight.

"I see you are trying to get us into a row," said the bully, somewhat savagely.

"No, indeed," replied Lippy Donald, with an air of offended innocence, "but I am a friend of yours, so I thought I'd tell you."

"Then, is that all?" asked Big Rory.

"No," drawled the mischief-maker, who was beginning to get afraid that his mission might prove a failure.

"Well, tell me all, and tell it quickly, or I'll beat you within an inch of your life," said the hero of Petitcodiac, losing control of his temper.

"When I told Archie the Widow Donald," continued the mischief-maker, now mortally afraid of a severe thrashing, "that you bet the Bully of New Brunswick, 'Oh,' he says, 'he didn't do it fair.'"

‘How?’ I says. ‘Well,’ he says, ‘he took his coat pockets full of wood ashes from home, and when he was squaring off before Dublin Pat, he throw’d a handful of ashes into the poor Irishman’s eyes and blinded him. That was how the Ghost Brook coward bet the Bully of New Brunswick up at Petitcodiac last winter,’ he says.”

“I will have Archie the Widow Donald’s life for saying that,” said Big Rory, crazed with passion. “Gather a crowd to go to Little Village to-night,” he added savagely, “for there is going to be a fight such as was never seen in Cape Breton before;” and he gave a loud, prolonged roar, brutal and frenzied, like that of an angry bull.

At five o’clock, Captain Roderick, Foxy Donald, and Yankee Bob came ashore, to find the Squire busy getting things ready for the festivities of the day. They helped him kill the sheep, milk the cows, and sharpen a couple of scythes; and, after they had a second breakfast under his hospitable roof, Captain Roderick was given charge of the whiskey, and Foxy and Yankee, with a scythe each, were sent to the field behind the house to cut the grass around the zig-zag fences, it being impossible to do this work with a mowing-machine.

Not long afterwards, Mrs. Angus the Horse-trader drove up to her brother-in-law’s house with Miss Isabel Black Duncan, one of the reigning belles of Big Village, who had come to visit her a couple of weeks

before. They brought two large baskets of eatables which they had cooked to help the Squire's wife, the Squire having sent them a supply of sugar, butter, eggs, molasses, raisins, currants, spices, and sundry other articles, a week before, the work of cooking for a mowing-frolic being too much for one woman.

A little later there came three of Limpy Donald's sons, two of Yankee Sandy's sons, two of Big John's sons, and Big Donald the Blacksmith, with scythes slung over their shoulders; William Red Murdoch, with a truck waggon; Young Johnnie Young John and Angus the Horse-trader, with a mowing-machine each; and Archie the Widow Donald, accompanied by dainty little Mr. Peter Red Peggie, dancer, flirt, factotum.

Archie brought a scythe, but Peter only brought a pair of light dancing shoes. He hailed from Danceyville, that paradise of dancers, and was a unique character: useless, genial, harmless; a wanderer, but an expert dancer, and a sort of general favourite who fattened on the hospitality of the people and retained at least their admiration and goodwill, if not their respect. He had no home, but wandered around, working a day here, a week there, and making his home wherever he happened to be. As he was neither rugged in appearance nor strong physically, his duties at the Squire's mowing-frolic were light, for, as kitchen-attaché, all he had to do was to carry wood and water for the women who had charge of the meals.

At eight o'clock, all the men were at work. The sun was shining brightly, a gentle southwest wind was blowing, and the air was filled with the merry hum of the mowing-machines, mingled at intervals with the monotonous sound of the whetting of scythes.

The merry scythemen, after trimming all around the zig-zag fences in the large field behind the Squire's house, went to the smaller field on the lower side of the post-road, leaving Angus the Horse-trader and Young Johnnie Young John to finish the work of cutting, with their mowing-machines. It was in this lower field they were, when, an hour later, Captain Roderick, accompanied by Grandfather, left the house with a couple of pints of whiskey.

The scythemen saw them leaving, and knew what it meant.

"Three cheers for Grandfather and Captain Roderick!" shouted one of Limpy Donald's sons.

"Hip, hip, hurrah! Hip, hip, hurrah! Hip, hip, hurrah—!" rang out on the warm air of that summer's morning.

"And a tiger!" shouted one of the group.

"Hurrah—!" was the lusty response.

When these two old cronies reached the field, two flasks were passed around among the scythemen who drank them to the dregs.

Young Lauchie Limpy Donald then proposed that they have a mowing-contest, and that Grandfather and Captain Roderick act as judges. His proposal was received with shouts of approval, and the enthusi-

astic scythemen at once began to prepare for the contest by cutting a swath all around this rectangular field, the edges of which were trimmed in to the fences.

Each scythe was then carefully examined and sharpened, and when all the competitors were ready, they were manoeuvred by the old smuggler and lined up at the edge of the uncut grass, Happy Bill Big John and Young Lauchie Limpy Donald, regarded as two of the best, being the only ones who were placed with regard to proficiency, for they were on the extreme left. But on the extreme right was Archie the Widow Donald, who was perhaps the best scytheman on the field, next to him coming Foxy Donald, then Yankee or Gloucester Bob.

"All ready?" Captain Roderick asked.

"All ready," answered the scythemen. "Let her go."

Happy Bill started, and when he got a few feet ahead, Young Lauchie followed, and so on to the end of the line, each being started as soon as his predecessor got a few feet ahead. So quickly was this effected, that scarcely had thirty seconds elapsed after Happy Bill made his first stroke when all the scythemen were in the thick of the contest.

The second last to start, Foxy Donald spurted, caught up to Gloucester Bob, who was forced to exchange places, only to be overtaken by Archie the Widow Donald, and compelled to go to the last swath.

Archie then pressed on, overtaking one after another of the scythemen, forcing each in turn to give

way, until he came to Young Lauchie, who was hotly chasing Happy Bill for the lead. It was then the contest began to get exciting, for neither Archie nor Young Lauchie seemed able to gain one inch on Happy Bill who was evidently the favourite, his only competitors now being much his superior in size. But he made up in quality what he lacked in size, for he was short, stout, and full of grit, and in every way appeared to be a match for them.

Archie the Widow Donald still pressed on, but Young Lauchie was watching him closely and did not allow him to gain an inch of ground.

"Go it, boys!" cried Grandfather in his excitement, and all the scythemen dropped out except the three leaders.

Young Lauchie then spurred madly, and began to overtake Happy Bill who unfortunately slipped, and was forced to take the last swath. He did not lose courage, however, and only allowed Archie the Widow Donald, then about eight feet behind, to gain two feet on him. He then spurred madly for his old place, and had the satisfaction of forcing Young Lauchie out of the contest altogether—for which he was wildly cheered by the onlookers.

The contest grew more and more exciting, although there were now only two competitors, for they were nearing the end, and Happy Bill was only three feet ahead.

Two minutes more and all would be over.

Happy Bill pressed on, Archie the Widow Donald

spurting madly for the lead. Happy Bill then quickened his stroke, but Archie began to gain ground bit by bit, overtaking his rival whom he finally forced out, finishing the victor's swath to the extreme left—alone.

Three cheers were then given for the winner who bore his victory modestly, none cheering heartier than Happy Bill who knew how to take defeat like a man.

"Three cheers and a tiger for Happy Bill!" shouted Archie the Widow Donald, and there was a lusty, spontaneous response, for Happy Bill was deservedly popular.

"What a splendid sight, Captain!" cried Grandfather.

"It was that," the old smuggler agreed. "But what's the matter with another round of Scotch?"

This brought three cheers and a tiger for Grandfather and Captain Roderick who accordingly went back to the house after some more whiskey, returning with it about the time the scythemen had finished mowing what was left of the lower field.

CHAPTER XII.

THE NIGHT FROLIC.

MEANWHILE Lippy Donald had gone around Ghost Brook trying to gather a crowd to descend on Little Village that night. But his efforts were not very successful. Even in Ghost Brook very few cared anything for Big Rory, although they were afraid of him. This fear kept four-fifths of those approached by Lippy Donald at home, because if they should go with their king of ruffians they did not know which of themselves might be the victim of perhaps his passing fit of anger. Hence it was that when Lippy Donald came back to the Ghost Brook bully's about ten o'clock that day, he had to acknowledge that he could only get ten, exclusive of himself, who would consent to accompany their idol to Little Village.

"That is enough," said Big Rory savagely. "I would not be wanting a gang at all, only there is going to be a frolic at the Squire's to-night, and some one in the crowd might hit me treacherously," and with that he gave a loud roar which startled even Lippy Donald, accustomed as he was to the bellowing of the brute.

"Won't you be tearing poor Archie the Widow Donald to pieces to-night, the son of a hell?" said the mischief-maker.

"Oh-h-h-h-h!" groaned Big Rory. "It's the man who started the story that I threw a handful of ashes into Dublin Pat's eyes that I want to kill. But Archie is going to get killed whatever," he added sullenly.

"Doesn't he deserve it, Bully?" said the mischief-maker, now pale from terror.

"The one who started the story deserves worse than death," was the bully's answer which was accompanied with a terrible roar, indicating the violent passion into which Lippy Donald's story about the ashes had worked him.

At half-past ten that morning all the grass on the Squire's farm was cut. It was a beautiful morning, too, the sun shining clear from a cloudless sky, and a dry warm wind blowing from the southwest. Everything was bright and gladsome, and every place was filled with the sweet odour of new-mown hay.

At half-past eleven Mr. Peter Red Peggie called home to dinner the jolly haymakers, who, with their whiskey-whetted appetites, did ample justice to the good things that had been prepared for them: to the black pudding made of sheep's blood, minced suet, onions, and oat-meal, seasoned with pepper and salt; to the white pudding made of oat-meal, minced suet, and onions; and to the Squire's new potatoes, a large potful of which had been cooked for the occasion.

"Them's great spuds, Squire," the old smuggler remarked. "Does the potato-bugs trouble you's much?"

"Not very, Captain," answered his genial host.

"And how does you's keep them down? Does you's use *Paris Green*?"

"No," answered the Squire.

"Wal," said the old smuggler, "that shows your sense. Why, only last year Lame Dugald from Little Frog Pond lost uvery calf he had on the place by monkeyin' with that well-know'd p'isin. 'Is the bugs bad your way, Dugald?' says Bill the Big Frog Pond Merchant with one eye on a package of *Paris Green*. 'Turrible,' says Lame Dugald, 'and has you's got anything to kill them?' 'Yes,' says Bill, 'we has got *Paris Green* with directions on the box that 'd kill the duvil himself.' 'Wal,' says Lame Dugald, 'give me a package to I try it whatuver.' 'Let the kids pick the bugs,' says Mrs. Lame Dugald when her husband show'd her the package, for she had twice as much sense as he had. But, 'No,' says Lame Dugald, whose kids was the laziest at Little Frog Pond; 'pickin' bugs is *infra dig*. the kids,' he says, 'so we's'll have to p'ison the cussed bugs.' Wal—he did p'ison the bugs, but he p'isoned uvery calf he had on the place. But that won't stop him. It's either *Paris Green* or no potatoes, for poor Lame Dugald, bein' a sort of rural aristocrat, thinks pickin' potato-bugs ain't just very dignified exercise for the children of a justice of the peace."

After this dissertation on the danger of using *Paris*

Green, the conversation drifted from one subject to another until finally some one broke the news that Crowing Johnnie from Long Beach was going to get married; and when it gets around that a poor fellow is about to take such a fatal step, there is always a joke, and a laugh, and sometimes a good deal of criticism.

"Is that Cross-eyed Rory's Johnnie Angusie?" asked the old smuggler.

"Yes," answered Angus the Horse-trader.

"Wal," said the old sea-dog, "I know'd him when he was a kid, and I was thinkin' it was strange unless somebody did give him a quare nickname."

"How's that?" asked Grandfather.

"Wal," said the old smuggler, "one day about twenty-one years ago this fall, I was at Long Beach, and I had a little business to Cross-eyed Rory, so I called at his house. I was acquainted with his wife before she was married. She was Split-the-wind Donald's daughter from Cape Simon, and they had one little boy about six months old. Wal—when I went into the kitchen, she was sittin' by the stove rockin' the baby to sleep, and they was two girls belongin' to one of the neighbours with her in the kitchen at the time. 'Good-day, Captain Rory,' she says, as soon as I poked my nose in on the door, 'and come and see what I got,' she says. Wal—I went over to where she was, and after shakin' hands to her I says, 'Sarah, you's got a treasure there,' I says, pattin' the child on the head. 'And what's its name?' I says. 'John Angus is the darlin's name,' she says, pokin' her chin

down into his face. 'And how old is he?' I says. 'Only six months, Captain,' she says. 'Wal—he's a bouncer for his age,' I says, and then the girls started to snicker. 'Come now, Johnnie Angusie dear,' she says, shakin' him to he got his feathers up, 'say cockie-doodle-doo for the ladies and gentleman.' Wal—I niver heared such crowin' before, as for cacklin', cluckin', chuck-eh-duh-in', and cluck-dawin', they wasn't a rooster in Cape Breton could beat him. But you should have heared the girls. One nudged the other with her elbow, and then they roared out laughin'. I did not quite ketch on to the point of the joke, but I know'd that something funny was goin' on. I suppose they were decidin' on callin' him Crowin' Johnnie then. But I wanted to see Cross-eyed Rory, so I says, 'Where's your husband, Sarah?' 'He went to Ghost Brook to-day,' she says, 'and what does you's want him for?' 'Wal,' I says, not wantin' to tell her my business, 'I only wanted to congratulate him on bein' the father of such a wonderful child.' 'Thank you,' she says. But I says, 'That child is a credit to his parents,' I says; 'and he's so smart,' I says. 'I was kind of thinkin' he was a little girl, he is so purty and looks so much like his mother,' I says. 'He's a handsome child whatuver!' Wal—that touched Sarah Split-the-wind Donald's heart in the right place. But I was in kind of a hurry that day, and I didn't want to hear any more crowin'. So, 'Good-day to you, Sarah,' I says, 'and be takin' good care of Johnnie Angusie, the little dear,' I says, 'for he may be a second Sir

John A. yet.' And she near dropped the poor child on the floor, she got so excited, but not wishin' to be responsible for the untimely demise of a future Premier of Canada, I just skin'd out of the house. Wal," he added sententiously, "it is women what-
ever!" and there was a laugh all around.

About five o'clock that afternoon, tea was served, and after tea the haymakers at once returned to their homes to get ready for the night-frolic. At six, the fiddler came—a stalwart, middle-aged widower, popularly known as Malcolm the Piper. He brought both his fiddle and bagpipes with him, and received a hearty welcome at the Squire's. His horse was stabled; he was treated to a copious draught of Scotch whiskey, and a table was spread for him with the best the house afforded. At seven o'clock the guests began returning, and by half-past seven they had all arrived. Besides those who were there during the day the number included the Widow Donald, three of Little Archie's daughters, Little Peggie Young John, Margaret the Sawyer, two of Squint-eyed Hector's daughters, Bella Limpy Donald, Christie Big John, Mary Yankee Sandy, two of White Rory's daughters, and last but not least, Grist-mill Nancy, the village gossip.

At eight o'clock the night-frolic opened with a double Scotch Four, Alex dancing with his mother; Grandfather, with his daughter Mary; the Squire, with Miss Isabel Black Duncan; and Captain Roderick, with bulky Miss Little Peggie Young John,

The bagpipes tuned, the piper struck up the *Duke of Gordon's Birthday*, and immediately the dancing began with a chain, the dancers in each of the two columns of four filing around in the chain with a sort of hop, until each of the ladies got back to her original place, each gentleman then dancing opposite his fellow's partner. And after they had danced *a step*, they again chained, filing around as before, the gentlemen now dancing opposite their own partners.

Presently the piper changed the tune to *Dunside*, and the enthusiasm of the dancers increased, Alex making such quick and difficult steps that it was hard to follow them, while Grandfather, whose Scots blood was stirred up as it had seldom been before, snapped his fingers, threw up his arms, and kicked into the air with the activity of a youth of twenty. The enthusiasm was not confined to the dancers; it soon spread to the onlookers who began to cheer. The piper then changed the tune to *Lord MacDonald's Reel*, somebody's doney-eddle-diddle tune; and the dancers again chained.

Captain Roderick was now wild with delight. He frisked in the chain like a young lamb, and after balancing before his bulky partner, screeched and kicked, throwing his arms wildly into the air. The piper quickened the time of the music, and again the dancers chained, and after balancing before Miss Isabel Black Duncan, Captain Roderick held her hands crosswise and danced with the wildest enthusiasm. Again the merry dancers chained, and Malcolm the

Piper, with a mischievous smile playing around his lips, again quickened the time of the music. The old smuggler again balanced before Little Peggie Young John, and after giving one long, loud yell which made all the guests laugh, he caught hold of his ponderous partner with her two hundred and twenty-four pounds avoirdupois, and swung her around and around to the right at a startling rate of speed; then, stopping suddenly, he proceeded to take the dizziness out of her head by vigorously swinging her to the left. But this was too much for Malcolm the Piper who could keep on no longer. He burst out laughing, and this ended the reel.

"That was splendid, piper," said Grandfather, as soon as he got control of his breath.

"Indeed and indeed," said Captain Roderick, "I niver see'd the likes before."

"Now for the *Highland Fling*," Grandfather suggested, wiping the perspiration off his face with a large, red handkerchief. "Where's Peter."

"Peter!" Miss Isabel Black Duncan called.

And Peter—Mr. Peter Red Peggie came.

The piper then struck up *Tullochgorum*, and the wandering dancer from Danceyville stepped out into the middle of the floor, his face aglow with delight.

With all his faults, Mr. Peter Red Peggie was really a splendid dancer, and the animation, vigour, abandon, and cleverness, with which he danced the Highland Fling, delighted the onlookers who loudly cheered him when he finished.

A Wild Eight-hand Reel came next; then followed Highland Schottishes, Plain Lancers, Scotch Fours, and Saratoga Lancers, until eleven o'clock, when a generous supper was served. But at twelve o'clock, when the dancing was about to be resumed, several men were heard yelling on the post-road below the Widow Donald's house which was situated about half a mile north of Little Village.

"What's going on there?" asked the Squire.

But nobody seemed to know.

At last Grist-mill Nancy, the village gossip, was applied to, and she very promptly told the Squire she heard that a gang of Ghost Brook ruffians were coming in to Little Village that night with Big Rory the Bully who was bound to have a fight with Archie the Widow Donald.

This intelligence at once broke up the night-frolic.

The Widow Donald decided to spend the night with Grist-mill Nancy, and Captain Roderick offered to take Archie aboard the *Rob Roy* for the purpose of outwitting the Ghost Brook gang.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BULLY MEETS HIS MATCH.

ABOUT eight o'clock that evening eleven Ghost Brook rowdies, headed by Lippy Donald, made their way to Big Rory the Bully's house.

"Oh-h-h-h-h!" groaned the big fellow, when he saw them coming, for he was almost insane with pent rage. "Some one is going to get killed to-night," he muttered to himself, horribly grinding his teeth; then followed a roar not unlike that of a mad bull—a roar which was at once taken up by the rest of the gang which was now nearing the house.

Ten, yes, twenty years' change seemed to have come over Big Rory in one short day. The ruddy face of but yesterday, was now haggardly livid; and the bright, fiery, dark-brown eyes of even that very morning, had faded with rage. His long, coarse, black, dishevelled hair, and thick, stubby beard, lent an additional fierceness of aspect to one already sufficiently fierce-looking. For in the eyes of the world he was no longer the noble avenger of a dead brother, but a brutal coward who had to resort to the contemp-

tible means of throwing ashes in the face of a powerful opponent he could not otherwise overcome. Ah, had he known, had he even suspected, that the false story, which had caused him such unutterable anguish, was but the creature of Lippy Donald's imagination, the Ghost Brook mischief-maker would already have been cold in death! But he did not know—he did not even suspect—the truth.

“Are you ready, Bully?” Lippy Donald asked.

“Yes,” answered the bully, sullenly, and the gang at once proceeded towards Little Village.

Little Village reached, the ruffians made straightway for the village grog-shop after whiskey, which they were unable to get. But they did not go to the Squire's, where his annual night-frolic was in progress, for fear of being outnumbered; they resolved to wait quietly for Archie the Widow Donald below his mother's house.

During the night they learned that Captain Roderick and his crew were ashore at the frolic, but it was not until about twelve o'clock that four of the gang, headed by the bully himself, decided to go aboard the schooner to see if they could get any whiskey.

The remaining eight were left in charge of Roaring Jimmie, who was perhaps the most boisterous of the Ghost Brook rowdies.

Lippy Donald was one of the three who accompanied Big Rory on his way to the shore. They had scarcely gone any distance when Roaring Jimmie began to yell. Those who were with him followed suit,

and it was this yelling the Squire heard about midnight, this yelling that made known the presence of the Ghost Brook rowdies, this yelling that broke up the night-frolic which otherwise would have continued until break of day.

After leaving the Squire's house, Captain Roderick, Foxy Donald, Yankee Bob, and Archie the Widow Donald, slipped quietly down to the shore. The night was very dark, so that they did not notice the Ghost Brook rowdies until they were upon them.

Big Rory was then in the act of pushing off the boat.

"What are you's tryin' to do?" Captain Roderick demanded, not knowing whom he had to deal with.

"Who are you that you dare to talk to me like that?" asked Big Rory, somewhat savagely.

"The owner of that boat," answered the old smuggler, "so make tracks at onct."

"How dare you tell me to make tracks!" said the Ghost Brook bully, catching Captain Roderick by the throat.

"Let me go at onct," the old smuggler gasped.

"Has he got hold of you, Captain?" asked Archie the Widow Donald, who forthwith caught, tripped, and threw Big Rory on his back on the shore.

"Who did that?" demanded the bully savagely, for no man was ever able to throw him before.

"Who but Archie the Widow Donald, the son of a hell," answered Lippy Donald on whom it had just dawned that the tall, athletic, young man was none

other than the one whose life the Ghost Brook bully sought.

"Oh-h-h-h-h!" groaned Big Rory, throwing Archie off and springing up himself. "Is that you, Archie the Widow Donald?"

"That's the son of a hell," answered Lippy Donald.

"Let me at him!" cried Big Rory. "Let me at him!"

"What do you want?" Archie demanded, taking good care to keep at a safe distance.

"I want your life," growled Big Rory, grinding his teeth. "It was you that started the story that I threw a handful of ashes into Dublin Pat's eyes before I thrashed him up at the Bend of Pedico-diac," he added, half-crying with rage.

"You are a liar," replied the widow's son whose words were perhaps stronger than he meant them to be, "and the one who told you that is a liar, too."

"You told me that for one, you son of a hell," said Lippy Donald, taking shelter behind the bully.

"Shut up!" cried Big Rory, giving the Ghost Brook mischief-maker a back-handed slap in the mouth which knocked him speechless on the shore. "Oh-h-h-h-h!" he then groaned. "I am going to have your life, Archie the Widow Donald. I am going to have your life, you son of a hell."

"Don't be afraid of him, Archie," whispered Captain Roderick, who felt that Archie had to fight before they could get out to the schooner. "Don't let

him get hold of you, but just play him out. And remember that we's'll all take a lickin' before we's'll see you hurt."

"Oh-h-h-h-h!" groaned Big Rory, making a savage lunge at Archie, who quietly ducked out of the way.

"Wal—Big Rory the Bully," said Captain Roderick, "if you's are lookin' for trouble, you may get enough of it before you's get through. Take off your coat, Archie," he added, turning to his young friend, "and we's'll see what's in the brute."

Gloomily angry and silent, the Ghost Brook bully stepped back to where his seconds were. He threw off his coat, rolled up his shirt sleeves, and then gave a hideous roar which echoed from scar to cliff, and cliff to scar.

The contrast between the two men was most striking: one was large, powerful, coarse, cruel, repulsive; the other, tall, wiry, quick, handsome, attractive. Big Rory was past thirty, while Archie had scarcely completed his twenty-first year.

"Are you ready to die?" asked Big Rory, coming forward to meet his opponent.

"When you can kill me," Archie answered defiantly.

These were the last words they spoke to each other for one long hour, during which Archie acted strictly on advice whispered by the old smuggler from time to time.

Big Rory was terribly aggressive; Archie, shrewdly

defensive, giving his powerful opponent no chance to get hold of him or even to land any kind of an effective blow.

At the end of the first hour Big Rory was almost insane with unsatisfied rage. Every attempt he made to catch his youthful opponent failed, and almost every blow fell short. He at length managed to get hold of Archie's left arm, and this was the real beginning of a struggle such as might often take place between elephant and tiger, but rarely between man and man.

They clinched. Big Rory first tried to throw his opponent over his head, but failed. He then grabbed Archie by the back and tried to crush him down, but this move met with no better success. He then tried to break his opponent's back with his powerful arms.

It now looked as if indeed the widow's son would not come out of this struggle alive. His nose was bleeding freely, his breathing became laboured, and he was as pale as death. But the Ghost Brook bully was slowly weakening, and was now more like a jaded bull than like a human being.

Pale and silent, Captain Roderick stood behind his young friend, whispering now a word of advice, now a word of cheer.

"Trip him, Archie," he at length suggested, and quick as thought Archie hooked his left leg around Big Rory's right, and down they fell heavily, Archie on top.

A roar of disappointed rage escaped the Ghost Brook bully who tried to bite off his opponent's right ear which was only saved by the timely intervention of the seconds.

But the struggle went on.

"He's goin' fast, Archie," whispered the old smuggler, "so make for him lively."

Enough. Archie at once became aggressive. With his left hand he landed a lightning blow on the pit of Big Rory's stomach—a blow which took that human monster's breath and doubled him up with the pain; then with his right Archie immediately struck his powerful opponent under the left jaw with such terrific force that the Ghost Brook bully fell heavily on the shore, jaded and thrashed, unconscious and conquered.

Lippy Donald at once yelled for the rest of the Ghost Brook gang under Roaring Jimmie, but before they had time to come to avenge the fall of their leader, Archie the Widow Donald was safe with his friends on board the *Rob Roy*.

CHAPTER XIV.

TWO STRINGS TO HER BOW.

ON his return to Horse Creek after an absence of about a month, Colonel Gordon found a collection of letters ahead of him, among the number one from Boston. This letter he opened first.

It was from Marion Thurlow, written the very night after her graduation from Radcliffe College; and although about a month old, it contained much that was of interest to the Colonel, for she told him how she and her mother had looked forward to his visit, and how disappointed they were when they found that he was not coming.

“‘Dr. Edwin Russell of Cambridge,’” he continued reading, “‘spent the evening with us. He is such a case! He kept us laughing almost continually with his amusing stories and good-hearted drollery. He is young, too, and handsome, and has the loveliest pair of deep blue eyes! Mother thinks he is just splendid. I only met him a short time ago, but it almost seems as if I knew him all my life. To-morrow he will take mother and me out driving, and we look forward to having a very pleasant time. . . .’”

This bit of news was anything but consoling. In her letter, too, although otherwise friendly, there was an undertone of disappointment, of humiliation, and, perhaps, of coolness, which Colonel Gordon did not fail to notice. Events of the month had temporarily crowded thoughts about her out of his mind—thoughts which now returned with an intensity proportionate to his love which, like himself, was strong, manly, unvarying.

After reading her letter he was a different man. He became reckless—was seized with a strong desire to tear himself from his surroundings, to break loose, to get away; yet a calm seemed to come over him as he thought of that lovely girl in the East who had looked in vain for his coming on a day on which his presence would have meant so much to her. But he realized that things were changing—that a formidable rival had loomed up on the eastern horizon. He did not even know what his own chances were, but he resolved to tell Miss Thurlow in his own way what he thought of her; he even decided to ask for her hand in marriage, and his letter when finished, after having been written, corrected, and rewritten many times, was typical of himself and ran word for word as follows:

“ Horse Creek, Wyo., July 27, —.

“ MY DEAR MARION,

“ Many, many thanks for your very kind letter which I only just received, as I have been continuously absent from Horse Creek since June 28th, the day on which

I rode in to Cheyenne to congratulate you on the happy occasion of your graduation. I have something to tell you, Marion. Eight years ago, a young Harvard student met a beautiful little brown-haired girl; and had she been twenty instead of twelve, he would have at once fallen in love with her. But as the years came and went, she grew in beauty, and in loveliness. She is now twenty, and he dares to love her with a strong man's honest love. You are that little girl; you are necessary to his happiness, and he now seeks your hand. Only tell him that his love is reciprocated, and he will be the happiest man in the world. I may add that he should like so much to go East to see you, but circumstances over which he has no control, prevent his going now. But write me, Marion, write me, and tell me—and write me soon.

“Always yours sincerely,

“W. CLIFFORD GORDON.”

Meanwhile Dr. Russell had been a frequent visitor at Fernwood. Marion had grown to like him, too, and her mother was happy—happy because the Colonel's chances were growing less every day, for constant attentions and kindnesses lavishly bestowed in the kindest way possible, were unconsciously having their effect.

“By the way, Miss Thurlow, you never told me the name of that friend of yours in the West?” Dr. Russell waggishly asked one fine July evening as they sat opposite each other on the verandah at Fernwood.

"I am not going to tell you, either," Marion answered with a tantalizing twinkle in her eye.

"You must," insisted the doctor.

"I mustn't."

And Marion was firm.

But Dr. Russell had heard all about her friend in the West from a talkative patient—an elderly lady who knew the Thurlows very well. His object in asking the question, was to ascertain if Miss Thurlow still cared for the Colonel. But clever as he was, Marion kept him in doubt, although she did seem to be very much flattered by his attentions.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SQUIRE.

WHEN the squire got to his shop, the next morning after the mowing-frolic, he found the Widow Goosey Archie ahead of him. Always on the move early, she had driven in from the country that morning for the purpose of having her late husband's affairs settled. For it appears that a couple of weeks before this, when Goosey Archie or Archie the Goose was on his deathbed, the Squire was sent for, to write his will. But the poor featherless fellow only lived long enough to give instructions as to the disposition of his property; he was cold in death's embrace long before the Squire finished his will.

"Have you dear Archie's will?" she asked, following the Squire into his shop.

"Yes," he answered, "sit down and I'll read it to you."

She wept bitterly while he was reading her late husband's will which provided that all his property, real and personal, should go to her absolutely and forever; but she soon dried her tears when she was told that, on account of its not being executed by the

deceased in the presence of two witnesses, it was as absolutely worthless as it was meant to be absolute in giving her the whole of his property.

"Well, Squire," she began, with a significant toss of her head, "ain't that just turrible? And will Archie's people get some of the property? Indeed and indeed," she added, "there is no wonder that they would be calling him Goosie Archie or Archie the Goose, for he was nothing but a goose whatuver. Oh, but how in the world, Squire," she then asked, sobbing bitterly, "is poor me going to get hold on all the property?"

The Squire felt for her, but he did not know that another Archie had been paying her attentions since her husband's death, for it was not Goosie Archie the First but Long Archie the Second that was in her mind when her tears were flowing so freely. Uncharitable as it may seem to say it, the real cause of her grief was that she feared her share of the property of the late featherless would not be sufficient to fetch Long Archie, for, as Captain Roderick would put it, "she was bound to have an Archie whatuver."

"And do you think any man will ever get to heaven that would do the likes of that on a poor widow?" she asked, after a pause, drying her tears with her handkerchief.

"His intentions were good," answered the Squire.

"Well 'm by gawsh," she replied, bristling up considerably, "what's the good of intentions to a poor widow? Now, can't you sign his name to that will to

keep the farm he earned so hard away from home out of the claws of his greedy father and his brother Donald who would be for taking the last bite out of my mouth?"

"No," the Squire answered firmly, "that would be dishonest."

"Well," she said dejectedly, shaking her head, "I suppose the only thing to do is to let everything go."

There was a long and painful silence.

"Have you any children?" the Squire at length asked.

"Yes," she answered, sobbing bitterly, "two small, weak children."

"Well," said the Squire, after carefully looking over a chapter in the Revised Statutes entitled *Of the Descent of Real and Personal Estate*, "all of Archie's property goes to you and the children."

The widow was delighted.

"You are better than a lawyer, Squire," she said. "How much to pay?"

"Nothing," he answered.

And muttering grateful, though hasty, thanks, she forthwith left the shop.

"Well 'm by gawsh," she said to herself when she was safely outside, a smile of satisfaction lighting up an otherwise sorrowful-looking countenance, "I will be getting Long Archie now whatever."

An hour later a prospective bridegroom, known as Grunty Donald, bobbed into the shop goose-fashion. He, too, was on law business, and soon had the

Squire at work on a deed transferring a five-acre lot to an old maiden-aunt who had been keeping house for him, but who, refusing to live with him any longer, strongly advised him to get married. When the deed was executed, and the Squire received his usual fee of two dollars, Grunty Donald departed, looking extremely happy.

But he had been gone only a few minutes when a sorrowful-looking maiden-lady, of uncertain summers, entered the shop. She was in very poor cheer, for a false report was being circulated to the effect that she had been distilling whiskey.

"Who started the story?" asked the Squire.

"Who but Grist-mill Nancy, the village gossip," answered the dejected *feme sole*. "Will you please get her to sign a lie-bill?"

"I'll try," said the Squire, and giving the complaining spinster a long stick of candy, left her in charge of the shop while he went out to interview the village gossip. When he returned, a few minutes later, he brought with him a glowing certificate of character from Grist-mill Nancy who knew why his client was in such distress over the story in circulation about her.

"I will tell you, Squire, why I was wanting to get a lie-bill signed," the delighted spinster then whispered in confidence. "I am going to be married to— to Mr. Grunty Donald, and he told me he wouldn't marry me until I cleared myself."

"Well, that certainly clears you all right."

"Indeed and it does, thanks to you, Squire."

The happy bride-elect then majestically sailed out of the shop with her clearance tied in one corner of her red bandanna.

The Squire's next customer was Sour-stomach Rory's wife—a short, nervous, pale-faced woman whom he had undertaken to treat for chronic dyspepsia, a few days before.

“Good-morning,” she said—and her voice had a sharp, unpleasant ring about it.

“Good-morning,” said the Squire, “and how do you like Dr. Cascara Sagrada's Dyspepsia Tablets?”

“Fine, I thank you,” she answered, “and I want a dozen bottles of the same.”

“I'm sorry I cannot let you have that many now,” the Squire replied. “I have only about a dozen left, and lots of people are wanting them. But I'll sell you enough to keep you going till I get some more,” and he gave her a half dozen bottles which cost poor Sour-stomach Rory three dollars.

“Charge the pills on the book, Squire,” she said, before leaving the shop, “and to-morrow I will be sending my Rory with some oats to pay for them.”

About an hour afterwards Ship-sheep Hector appeared on the scene, a violent fit of coughing having seized him as he entered the Squire's shop.

“What's the matter?” asked the Squire.

“All's the matter,” Mr. Ship-sheep Hector answered, as soon as he got control of his breath. “I am not feeling *ship-sheep* those times; I am sick—going to die, is it?”

"Well, what are you complaining of?"

"Complaining of, is it? 'Most uverything from hard times to want of appetite—cold feets, a pain in my heart, flesh chattering with the cold, tired feeling, and sour stomach, is it?"

"And what are you eating?" asked the Squire.

"'Most uverything that comes along—ham and eggs, corn beef, vegetables, oat-meal bread, pancakes, cheese, and so forth, is it? I take two cups of tea first thing uvery morning, and as I am too sick to work, I goes around visiting the neighbors, getting two or three cups more at each house. I usually takes about twenty cups of tea uvery day, and two the last thing before going to bed. But I cannot sleep *ship-sheep*, is it?"

"You are a broken-down dyspeptic," said the Squire. "However, I have some tablets that will cure you, that will fix you up *ship-shape*, but you must stop drinking tea——"

"Oh-h-h-h-h!" groaned poor Mr. Ship-sheep Hector.

"And limit your meals to two a day," the Squire continued. "You must abstain from all fried stuff, vegetables, cheese, fresh bread, and all other strong food. Live on a moderate amount of milk, dry toast, and soft-boiled eggs, and take one of Dr. Sagrada's pills after each meal, and you'll be a new man."

"And I'll be a new man, is it?" said poor Mr. Ship-sheep Hector, on leaving the shop, after buying all the tablets the Squire had left, unable to decide for

himself; however, as he proceeded homeward whether it would not be better to die than to give up drinking tea.

It was not until half-past ten that a good deal of annoyance came along in the shape of a prim little spinster, of numerous summers and choleric temperament, popularly known as Bella the Clippers.

At a glance the Squire knew that she was in one of her worst fits of temper.

"Well, Squire," she said, poking her head in on the shop door, and stamping her feet alternately on the door-step, "where do you expect to go when you die?"

"To heaven, of course," answered the Squire.

"To heaven?" she repeated, with a cutting sneer. "Well, then, you will have to change your ways and stop cheating poor people, you vile old hypocritical villain! That pie-plate you sold me wouldn't bake mud, leaving baking pies out of the question, you diabolical old pettifogger! But you took my ten cents for it, though, you blood-sucking, leech-natured old cutthroat!"

"What was wrong with the pie-plate?" asked the Squire, who was all but losing his temper. "Did you try it, Bella?"

"I didn't try it," answered his customer, "but the bottom was loose."

The Squire laughed in her face.

"You're away behind the times, Bella," he said. "That's the latest pie-plate on the market. Try it,

and if it doesn't suit, bring it back and I'll cheerfully refund your money."

His amiable customer felt so cheap that she forthwith left the shop and did not give him any more trouble that day.

CHAPTER XVI.

FOXY DONALD GOES WITHOUT HIS VADE MECUM.

EARLY in the afternoon, the day of the Squire's mowing-frolic, Foxy Donald, not wishing to depend altogether on the whiskey so generously supplied by his host, made off, with a long step and a short step, towards the village grog-shop which was run by a maiden-lady of seventy odd summers, who was at one time the reigning belle of the neighbourhood. Dubbed *Big* by her jealous social rivals, who thought she was proud, in her younger days she was engaged to Montana Bill, a young man who had made a small fortune in the West. But Montana Bill wandered to foreign lands after squandering all his money in drink, her parents died, and, left to her own resources, she soon lost one after another of the valuables she had inherited from her father. Thus it was that she came down to the level of selling liquor contrary to the provisions of the *Scott Act*, a local option law in force in Little Village.

A couple of hours before Foxy Donald left for the grog shop, two men stood leaning over the bar at the Temperance Hotel, Big Village; one a con-

stable, the other a hog-reeve. The hog-reeve was short, stout, smooth-faced ; the constable, lanky, clownish, lazy-looking. But the constable was Scott Act inspector for the district of Little Village and looked down on his companion, who only occupied the humble position of hog-reeve to the good people of the district of Danceyville.

"Where are you's going this afternoon?" asked the hog-reeve. "I see your horse hitched outside."

"To Little Village," drawled Black Paul the Gauger, as the Scott Act inspector was called, looking askance at his less favoured companion, "for they tells me that Big Flossie Montana Bill is selling liquor again."

"That's what I heared myself," assented the hog-reeve; "and this would be a good time to be getting after her. The Squire's having his annual mowing-frolic to-day, and if she has any liquor on hand, she is almost sure to be selling."

"Then let's have another round before I go," the Scott Act inspector suggested, stretching himself and yawning drowsily, but it was the proprietor of the Temperance Hotel who did the honours.

After purchasing the last drop of liquor on sale at the village grog-shop, Foxy Donald slowly sauntered along the little pathway leading towards the post-road which was only a few score yards distant ; and just as he reached the post-road, along came a lanky, clownish, lazy-looking fellow on horseback, who, eyeing him closely, noticed the top of a flask sticking out of his pocket.

"Now, let me see," said Black Paul to himself, "if I have sufficient evidence. Here's a man coming out of Big Flossie's with only the top of a sealed flask sticking out of his pocket. That's enough. But who can he be? I see," he added, presently, noticing the *Rob Roy* at anchor within half a mile of the shore. "He must belong to that schooner. Besides, I'm sure he is a sailor, for he has an anchor tattooed on the back of one hand, a schooner on the other. I must watch where he goes."

He did watch, and had the satisfaction of seeing Foxy Donald return to the Squire's hayfield; then, after asking one of Big Donald the Blacksmith's unsuspecting children a few questions, he returned to Big Village.

But poor Foxy Donald did not even have one drink out of the flask, for on his return it was taken from his pocket, without either his consent or his knowledge, and drained to the dregs behind the Squire's barn.

CHAPTER XVII.

BIG FLOSSIE IN TRIBULATION.

ABOUT seven o'clock next morning the *Rob Roy* worthies came ashore, Captain Roderick's object being to ascertain if Big Flossie Montana Bill wanted any of his August cargo of liquor. When he arrived at the grog-shop and peeped in on the partly open door, he found things very different from what he had expected, for lo! the kitchen floor was all wet, the ceiling dripped with water, and the house was full of smoke.

"Oh, this fire is beyond me!" came from a woman upstairs. "My poor house is gone, my poor house. I was poor enough before. God help me! Oh, my poor house is gone, my poor house!"

Her house was, indeed, a wretched one, with its rudely hewn frame visible on all sides. Captain Roderick, anxious to know what the trouble was, went upstairs. At first, he could see nothing, partly on account of the smoke, and partly because there was no window, light only gaining access through the numerous chinks in wall and roof. But soon there appeared through the gloom a rough table on which stood one of the most dejected of mortals, her tat-

tered clothes drenched through and through. It appears a spark had escaped from one of the holes in a rusty old stovepipe, which served as a flue, igniting the upper end of one of the rafters, and the poor woman was vainly endeavoring to extinguish the fire by splashing water on it with a long-handled dipper.

"Oh, my poor house is gone," she sobbed as if her heart would break. "I was poor enough before, God knows; forsaken by everybody—alone in the world."

"Wal," said Captain Roderick, "what can a fellow do for you's?"

"O God help a poor woman!" the wretched creature cried in wild despair, dropping the long-handled dipper she held in her hand.

"Take it easy, old woman," said Captain Roderick coolly. "If I had a couple of ladders, I'd put that fire out in a few minutes. But keep cool, old woman; don't get excited."

She then came down from her perch, and, following him outside, she took him to where there were a couple of ladders which he soon had in position on the roof; then, climbing up coolly to the top of the burning grog-shop, he there sat astride.

Meanwhile Big Flossie was on her way to the brook calling out at the top of her voice, "Oh, my poor house is gone, my poor house! I was poor enough before, God knows. But what will become of me when I lose all I have to the world?"

When she reached the brook she bent down, filled her buckets, and then tried to return. But she was

seized with a sudden dizziness, and almost fell from exhaustion.

"Oh, my poor house is gone!" she sobbed, bravely staggering on, on, on, until she finally got back to her wretched dwelling.

She was jaded, and out of breath, too, but she struggled up the ladder, and placing one bucket on the first rung of the roof-ladder, the other on the second, she descended slowly. But when Captain Roderick started to come down after the water, the roof-ladder moved, the upper bucket slipped—hit the lower, and both spilt on the poor wretch below, who had scarcely time to get out of the way of one of the buckets, which almost put an end to her grief forever.

Captain Roderick, now realizing that there was no time to be lost, came down from the roof, and, grabbing the buckets, ran to the brook after more water.

Sitting alone at the side of her burning house, poor, ill-fed, ill-clad, drenched with water, and shivering with the cold, Big Flossie fainted, her head sank to her knees, and her mind wandered—wandered in a happy dream.

She was no longer old, despised, forsaken; but young, beautiful, admired. Clad in white, she wandered in bright fields where none but the fairest flowers bloomed and grew. She was happy once again—happy in a dream, for she had known no other happiness for many a dark, cheerless day.

She now strolled by the sea-shore with her lover, and it was the same old sea-shore, too. She saw the

waves lazily roll shoreward, and she once again heard the glad shout of the fisher-lad in his boat on the sea. Ah, this was the happy time of youth, fond memories of which still clung to her like so many vines to an old forsaken ruin!

She dreamt that the sun was setting, and she saw the floods of kindly, soft, warm, golden light that came over the restless, blue waters of the Gulf; and as the weary old sun sank to his place of rest, a white sail appeared at the distant horizon—only an emblem, perhaps, of the blighted hopes of her youth, but perhaps it was a presage of something better that was coming—of happiness long deferred.

"Fire's out, old woman," said Captain Roderick, coming down from the top of the house.

The poor woman awoke from her pleasant dream, a faint gleam of happiness struggling with the lines of care, sorrow, and suffering that deeply furrowed her face.

"Fire's out, old woman," the old smuggler repeated; "fire's out."

"Thank God!" she cried, getting hysterical with joy. "Oh, my poor house is saved, my poor house! It is poor enough, God knows, but it is all I have."

"Wal," said Captain Roderick, "your house is all right. But you's ain't all right yourself. Get some dry clothes on."

She forthwith staggered into the kitchen, then into the small bedroom adjoining it, and, closing the door after her, she bolted it, changed her clothes, and pres-

ently appeared in a warmer, if more ragged dress than she had on before.

Meanwhile Captain Roderick had been stirring up the fire in the kitchen stove, and when the water in the kettle was hot, he produced a flask of Scotch whiskey and made a bowl of hot Scotch which was his universal and unfailing remedy—his panacea for all the aches, pains, and ills of life.

"Here, old woman," he said, handing her the bowl, "drink this."

"Thank you, stranger," she answered softly, in that kind way which made her so attractive in youth—and she quickly drank the diluted whiskey. "Your coming saved my house," she then added, "for I should now be homeless, were it not for you; and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. But I was not always poor and friendless. I once had a good home, and was well educated for my day and generation. Life's morning was bright and full of promise, but life's day was darksome and full of woe. The road was long, and cold, and cheerless, too, but it is fast nearing an end. The journey hither was made alone—without a friend to cheer or help me, for the friends of my youth—the friends of my old-home days—had one and all forsaken me. Friends, stranger, are like leaves; they cling through the long, bright summer, but they all fall in a single morning when the first frosts of autumn come. They only cling to suck a sustenance; the source exhausted, they drop away forever! Yes, I have suffered much in life. But the

end will come apace. Farewell, then, stranger, and may peace and happiness attend you—farewell!”

Deeply touched by her utter desolation and helplessness, the kind-hearted old smuggler pulled from his pocket a five-dollar note which he rolled up into a ball and handed to her.

“Take this, old woman,” he said; “it may help you’s out some. But don’t look at it to I’m gone.”

“Thank you, stranger,” she said, great tears of gratitude coursing down her cheeks, “but to whom am I indebted for all this kindness?”

Without waiting for an answer, she proceeded to unroll the note, her curiosity getting the better of her. When she looked up again, her benefactor was gone.

“Wal,” the old sea-dog philosophized, when he was safely out, “women are quare, for as soon as that old hen came to her senses after swallowin’ a bowl of hot Scotch, the first thing to crop up was that old and well-know’d curiosity—that curiosity which began with poor misfortunate Eve in the Garden of Eden and ’ll continue till Death, accordin’ to the old, old proverb, ’ll draw the last woman’s breath with his old and well-know’d cork-screw. Wal—it is women whatuver!”

“And he’s gone!” she sighed, as she rocked herself to and fro by the fireside in an old-fashioned home-made rocking-chair, fondly holding in her work-worn hand the money she had received from that kind-hearted stranger who had saved her house. When it grew dark, she lit a tallow-candle which she placed

on a shelf behind the stove. She dreamt, too, of a happier time that was coming, perhaps in this cruel old world itself. But her dream of happiness had a cruel ending, for about half-past nine there entered the kitchen, without knocking, a burly constable who bluntly told her the nature of his mission and withdrew after serving her with a summons to appear before the Squire and Big Donald the Blacksmith, the following morning, to answer to the charge of selling intoxicating liquor contrary to the provisions of the Second Part of *The Canada Temperance Act*.

"O God help me!" she cried, staggering into her wretched bedroom, and flinging herself helplessly on her couch. "God help a poor, friendless woman!" Worn out with a life of lonely wretchedness, with nerves wholly unstrung from her recent hysterical excitement, without any one to care for her, she lay shivering on her miserable bed, with only a few tattered rags for bed-clothes, until she at length sobbed herself into a heaven-sent slumber, while a few hungry mice played on the loft above her and the tallow-candle burnt out on the shelf in the kitchen.

"What paper is that stickin' out of your pocket, Donald?" the old smuggler asked, after they got back to the *Rob Roy* that night.

"A summons," Foxy Donald answered, "to show up as a witness in a Scott Act case against Big Flossie that's goin' to be tried to-morrow."

"Wal," said the old sea-dog, "ain't that duvilish? Stop you, though, I'll be there!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PALACE OF JUSTICE.

EARLY next morning, when the Squire came down to his shop, he seemed to be greatly worried. For he was one of the resident judges of the neighbourhood; he was senior judge, too; in fact, he was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Little Village: and, being a very kind-hearted man, it was very much against his will that he had taken the case against the unfortunate proprietress of the village grog-shop. But it was not a matter of choice with him.

As the trial was to begin at ten o'clock, and as his shop had to be converted into a Palace of Justice, he felt that it was his duty to put everything in order for this special midsummer sitting of the court—that he must sprinkle and sweep the court-house floor, and dust counters, show-cases, chairs and desk, with a damp cloth; and he did so.

His shop, too, was a big one, judged by the Little Village standard of bigness, for it was one and a half stories high, sixty feet in length by twenty-five in breadth, and was divided by a board partition

into two principal parts, the front shop and the back shop, so-called, each part occupying one-half of the building; and on the right-hand side of the back compartment, adjoining the partition, was an eight-by-twelve office in which he kept his books, papers, and medicine.

In the back shop proper there was a variety of commodities—a puncheon of molasses, a cask of kerosene, several barrels of flour, raw hides, tubs of butter, wool, eggs, rakes, forks, scythes, and kegs of nails: in the front shop, the shelves on the right-hand side were used exclusively for collars, calicoes, cashmeres, and numerous other articles of a like nature; those on the left-hand side, for boots, shoes, spices, and cutlery; those at the end, for hats, caps, crockery, and glassware. And from nails, which were driven in the five beams below the ceiling, hung pots, kettles, pans, lanterns, cans, and creamers.

Now that the village court-house was ready for the trial, the Squire sat down to await the coming of his associate, Mr. Justice Big Donald the Blacksmith, and the coming of defendant, witness, and prosecutor.

Strange to say, Grist-mill Nancy did not hear anything about the trial until half an hour before it was to have begun, her suspicions being first aroused by the presence of Black Paul the Gauger, who had driven in from Big Village that morning; and as she was insatiably eager for news and curious beyond compare, she at once went to work to find out what brought him, and this led her to the knowledge of the fact that Big

Flossie Montana Bill was to be brought to trial for selling liquor in violation of the Canada Temperance Act.

"Her trial comes off at ten o'clock, Nancy," said the Widow Donald who was the first to break the news.

"Indeed and indeed," said the inveterate gossip, not a little annoyed that such an important bit of intelligence should have so long escaped her, "it is time she was caught. For the old hag is just rotten with money. She has been selling liquor these last thirty years and had no one to spend her cash on except herself. She is just rotten with money, I repeat, but she is too mean to wear decent clothes or live like a human being. Well, I say, if she had to work all her life as hard as I had, and got as little for it, she wouldn't be living at all, the old hag! She'll have to cough up fifty dollars or take a three months' vacation in the Big Village jail, where she can enjoy the scenery on the inside of the jail fence and hold revel with the rats, mice, and other vermin that infest the place, the old miser! She'll enjoy it, no doubt, better than paying the fine, the miserable old hag! For if she got what she deserved, she would have been strung up by the neck long ago, and would now be snoring on the broad of her back in some graveyard or another, the leech-natured old cutthroat!"

Most people were of the same opinion, although they were not quite so uncharitable; still, they were convinced that Big Flossie had been hoarding money,

all her life, and many ludicrous tales were current about the strange places she had for secreting it.

What kind of a looking fellow is that Gauger?" asked the Widow Donald, herself possessed of the average amount of curiosity.

"Well," answered the village gossip, "he's long, lanky, and clownish! And they are telling me he never fines the big liquor men who are making their thousands out of the rum, but only prosecutes a few poor devils who can't cough up—you know," she added, with a significant toss of her head.

She was right, for the unfortunate proprietress of the village grog-shop was one of these, and Black Paul the Gauger was almost devotional in his zeal to crush forever the poor human worm on whom poverty and want had already trodden.

Up early after a fitful sleep, Big Flossie went stupidly about her cheerless habitation after breakfasting on a few dry crusts of bread—the only food left in the house. She did not even have a glass of liquor to brace her up, for she had sold the last drop she had to Foxy Donald the day of the Squire's hay-frolic; and it seemed hard that he should be the only witness against her. Ah, little did her prosecutors think of the mental and physical suffering she had endured that morning and the night before, and how pitiless, harsh, cruel, futile, the remedy used, forsooth, to raise her up!

When the time for the trial at length arrived, she

threw a tattered shawl over her head and shoulders, and left for the Squire's shop.

"God help me!" she sobbed. "I am guilty, too. I did sell liquor, but I did it for bread alone—for a few crusts of bread. But I shall lose the case, I am so poor. I have no one to speak for me, no one to defend me, no one to ask for mercy. I shall surely lose, and then what will become of me with only fifty cents, besides the money a dear old stranger gave me, to pay a fine of fifty dollars and costs. My poor cow and stove will not be enough. I must go to jail. O God help me!" she cried in utter despair, then staggered on to meet her fate.

Alex happened to be standing near the door of his father's shop when the unhappy woman came up, and he noticed that she was weeping.

"Don't cry, poor woman," he said tenderly. "Mother won't let father send you to that horrid jail."

So touched was the wretched creature with this boyish manifestation of good will that she could say nothing, she could do nothing—but weep, and weep she did, poor woman, with her face buried in her tattered shawl. Her mind was weak, though, and it wandered—wandered to a bright and happy place where little children played and sang, and where none but the loveliest flowers bloomed and grew; but brightest, and fairest, and happiest, and best, was the little brown-eyed boy who said—

"Mother won't let father send you to that horrid jail."

By this time Black Paul the Gauger was beginning to get uneasy, and going to the shop door he poked out his bullet-shaped head and grumbled with characteristic coarseness—

"Come in, rummy. Trial soon be's starting."

"I must go now, dear boy," said the poor wretch softly. "I must try to be brave," she added, drying her tears with her tattered shawl. "I shall face the worst, for I have not long to live any more. I only hope death will not long delay; it cannot come too soon now."

"Oh, how I wish I were a big, strong man!" said Alex. "I wouldn't let them treat you this way."

"But when you are big and strong, dear boy, you will call at the grave where the poor old woman you were so kind to, will be getting the rest that was denied her here."

She gasped for breath—said no more, but staggered into the Squire's shop.

CHAPTER XIX.

“THE COURT’S SETTIN’.”

THE village court-house was crowded. Grist-mill Nancy was there, and the Widow Donald, and Little Peggie Young John, Jessie White John, Isabel Black Duncan, Margaret the Sawyer, Bella Limpy Donald, Christie Big John, Mary Yankee Sandy; and Captain Roderick, and Duncan Big John, Murdoch Yankee Sandy, Sour-stomach Rory, Ship-sheep Hector, Hurricane Bob, half a dozen Archies—Little Archie, Big Archie, Long Archie, Short Archie, Lane Archie, and Archie the Widow Donald; and three or four Donalds besides Foxy Donald, Grunty Donald, Lippy Donald, Limpy Donald, Split-the-wind Donald, and His Lordship Mr. Justice Big Donald the Blacksmith. There were many, many others, young and old, fat and lean, straight and crooked, wise and foolish; maidens, widows, widowers, benedicts, wives, mothers; each possessing a little more than the ordinary amount of curiosity, all having come to witness the trial of poor Miss Big Flossie Montana Bill.

The Squire sat facing the audience in front of an

old-fashioned desk; Big Donald the Blacksmith, on the counter beside him.

"The court is now open," said the former, "and the only case on the docket is Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen versus a person commonly known as Big Flossie Montana Bill. Black Paul the Gauger, of Big Village, appears for the prosecution; the defendant appears in person. Stand up," he then added, addressing the defendant, and as soon as she slid off the opposite counter, with becoming seriousness he read the charge against her—a charge of selling liquor contrary to the provisions of the Scott Act. "Are you guilty or not guilty?" he then asked.

There was no answer.

"Are you guilty or not guilty?" repeated Mr. Justice Big Donald the Blacksmith.

"Not guilty," Captain Roderick ventured. "Go on with the case."

"Your witness, please, Mr. Prosecutor?" the Squire suggested.

Foxy Donald then elbowed his way through the crowd to the Squire's desk.

"Now swear him tight, Squire," Grist-mill Nancy advised.

But the Squire paid no attention to her.

"Place your hand on the book," he said, addressing the witness, who, contrary to the practice in the Supreme Court of Little Village, placed his left hand on the Bible. "The evidence you shall give the court," he then proceeded, without noticing the irregularity,

"touching the case—the other hand, Donald, the other hand—wherein Big Flossie Montana Bill is defendant, shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So help you God."

And Foxy Donald, after reverently kissing the Bible, was ready to give his evidence.

"You are generally known as Foxy Donald?" Black Paul began.

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know the defendant?"

But just then the shop door opened, and in came Bella the Clippers.

"Hello-o-o-o-o!" she cried. "Good-day to the Squire! And what's up?" she asked, stamping her feet alternately, and elbowing her way through the crowd.

"Shame, Bella," said Mr. Justice Big Donald the Blacksmith, "the court's settin'."

"Squire," she began, utterly ignoring the sacredness of the place and the solemnity of the occasion, all eyes fixed upon her, "that pie-plate worked great—and the corn cure! Now, I want another pie-plate of the same kind, and two cents' worth of cloves, quick, quick, quick!"

"Well," said the Squire, leaving his seat, "I suppose the court will have to rest from its labours for a few minutes."

And the court did rest until the Squire got the waspish little spinster what she wanted.

"A thousand thanks to you, Squire," she said, as

he passed her the pie-plate and cloves, "and when those beastly corns are cured," she added, handing him the money for her purchases and winking at Grist-mill Nancy, "I am going to come down some day to get you to operate for an in-growing toe-nail,"—a threat which created an uproar lasting several minutes. But the prim little spinster did not seem to care very much, for she stamped her feet alternately on the floor until the laughter subsided, then added, "Indeed and indeed, you needn't laugh, for I am simply coming whatever. But you're welcome to the fun, so good-day to you all;" and she forthwith left the village court-house, the sacredness and solemnity of which she had so greatly disturbed.

"The court is now re-open," said the Squire, as soon as he got back to his seat; and the court, no doubt considerably refreshed by its rest, resumed its arduous labours.

"Do you know the defendant?" the prosecutor proceeded.

"I think I see'd her before."

"Were you to her house last Friday—the day of a certain hay-frolic?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you buy any intoxicating liquor from her on that occasion?"

"I bought a certain glass receptacle from her on that occasion."

Just then the shop door opened, and in bobbed Mrs. Sour-stomach Rory.

"Good day to the Squire," she said, "and what's all the big fuss about?"

"The court's settin'," Mr. Justice Big Donald the Blacksmith answered, somewhat sharply.

"Who's talking to you?" replied Mrs. Sour-stomach Rory. "I came here," she added, addressing the court, amid considerable laughter, "to pay my honest debts—to pay for some dyspepsy medicine I got yesterday, and I don't care whether the court is settin' or not. I sent my Rory to pick potato-bugs——"

The laughter was now deafening, and poor Sour-stomach Rory felt so ashamed that he hid behind Archie the Widow Donald.

"And I came with the oats myself," she continued, as soon as she could make herself heard. "The oats is in the cart—in bags. Come, Squire," she then commanded, "come and wait on me, for I want to get home early."

"The court will again rest," said the Squire, leaving his seat, having seen at a glance that it was no use to reason with his patient.

When her consignment of oats was carried into the back shop it was found to contain twelve bushels—the exact amount required to liquidate her bill for the wonderful tablets.

"How is your dyspepsy getting, Mrs.?" asked Grist-mill Nancy, the first opportunity.

"Fine, I thank you," answered Mrs. Sour-stomach Rory proudly. "Dr Cascara Sagrada's medicine's the boy! And do you know what I am thinking?"

"What is that?" asked the village gossip.

"That Dr. Cascara Sagrada must be a turrible nice man. I would like to get one look—one squint at him."

Another uproar followed. It was therefore no wonder that the Squire felt relieved when Mrs. Sour-stomach Rory made her exit.

"What kind of a glass receptacle was this you said you bought?" Black Paul then asked.

"Didn't examine it duvilish close," answered the wily witness, "but it 'd hold almost any kind of a liquid."

"Had it a glass cork?"

"Didn't see any."

"Was there anything in it?"

"From the outside it looked as if they might be something in it."

"Was it anything like this?" the prosecutor then asked, handing the witness a pint flask half full of Scotch whiskey, much to the amusement of the spectators.

"Let me see," said Foxy Donald, who, after examining it very carefully, greatly shocked the court by guzzling its contents. "That ain't bad stuff," he then remarked, thus creating an uproar even greater than that caused by something Mrs. Sour-stomach Rory had said a few minutes before.

"Was the receptacle you speak of anything like this one?" Black Paul asked sharply, when quiet was again restored.

"On the outside," Foxy Donald answered coolly.

"That will do," said the prosecutor.

"Just a question or two, witness," said Captain Roderick. "You said you's didn't examine that glass receptacle duvilish close; now, did you's take the cork out of it?"

"No, sir."

"You's didn't see it again after you's put it in your pocket first?"

"No."

"You's doesn't know what was in it?"

"It might have been water, for it's an old trick in Cape Breton—fillin' a flask with molasses and water, for a joke, and passing it off for the genuine eighteen carat."

"That'll do, Donald."

"Just a minute, witness," said the prosecutor. "Didn't you ask for whiskey when you went to defendant's house?"

"No," answered the witness. "'Has you's got any—you know?' I says, and she produced the goods."

"What goods?"

"The goods in question," was the ready answer.

"And you paid fifty cents for the goods in question?"

"Y-yes."

"Any witnesses for the defence?" asked the Squire, representing the court.

But there was no answer.

"Now, your honours," said the prosecutor with a

superb air of self-confidence, "there's no use going any further as we have enough evidence. For you'll remember that there was a mowing-frolic on Tuesday last, and that Foxy Donald was there. You'll please bear in mind, too, that he was not a willing witness. But he admitted being at the defendant's house where he bought a flask containing some liquid which was none other than whiskey. Now, what brought him to the village grog-shop? What else could he have got for the usual price of a flask of whiskey, if not a flask of whiskey itself? Isn't it a well-known fact that the defendant has been selling liquor for years and years? Where's the evidence that the mysterious liquid wasn't whiskey? Why doesn't the accused take the witness stand if she didn't violate the law? The reason is plain—she is guilty. Therefore convict her, impose the usual fine, and if she can't pay it, send her to jail."

"Well," said the Squire gravely, addressing Big Flossie, "it is now my painful duty to ask you why sentence should not be pronounced upon you."

"I am only a poor, friendless woman," the wretched creature sobbed as if her heart would break.

"Take it easy, old woman," said Captain Roderick, "to I dips my oar into the general sass, for this thing's just a little one-sided. Now, what did Foxy Donald buy, your honours? A glass receptacle. And what was in it? Might 'a' been water. Witness doesn't know. Didn't sample its contents, didn't take the cork out of it—whatuver it was. And on this flimsy evidence you's are asked to guess—to guess, I repeat,

that a poor old woman sold liquor in violation of that statutory farce commonly know'd as the Scott Act. Why, your honours, it's simply duvilish on the face of it! And let me say right here that it'd be more manly, not to speak of bein' more charitable, for those who are persecutin' this poor woman, to haul wood and chop it for her, after helpin' her out in the grub line. It won't take very much to keep her goin', either, for she doesn't look like a very heavy eater. But give her justice to-day. And 'pon my soul, your honours," he concluded with savage vigour, "if you's 'll so far forget yourselves as to find her guilty, I's'll pay the fine myself rather than see her go to that paradise for rats and other vermin, commonly know'd as Big Village jail."

"Well," said the Squire, "to settle the matter, I adjudge Big Flossie Montana Bill innocent of the charge preferred against her. We are not here to guess."

"I concur," said Mr. Justice Big Donald the Blacksmith.

"Oh, you dear old stranger!" cried the overjoyed proprietress of the village grog-shop, coming off her perch on the counter and elbowing her way through the crowd to where Captain Roderick was. "You are the good, kind man!"

"Go 'way, old woman, go 'way," said the quaint old sea-dog, on whose ears words of endearment always grated, as he edged his way towards the shop door; and, slipping away towards the shore, he was seen no

more by his many admirers who stood discussing the case in front of the village court-house.

It was a happy day for the poor, wretched woman; nor did her happiness end with the close of that blissful day. The trial created an immense wave of sympathy for her, and its close was the beginning of that happier time of which she had dreamt, the evening before, while sitting at the side of her burning house. For she soon had many friends who looked after her few wants and saw that she was both warm and comfortable, so that she was never again under the necessity of selling liquor for a living. Properly fed, and clad, too, it was not long before she had completely recovered her health, the pinched look disappearing from her face and her kindly blue eyes glowing with the happiness of the new life that had opened for her. Thus the evening of her life, like its morning, was bright, cheerful, and happy. In that morning the sun shone radiantly, the birds sang sweetly, and both field and flower were fair and beautiful; and although the day was cold, dark, and dreary, yet, the evening was as bright and cheerful as the summer sunset on the restless Gulf.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DOCTOR AND THE DUKE.

THAT same evening Dr. Russell called at Fernwood where he was received more graciously than ever by Mrs. Thurlow. It was little wonder, for he was perhaps the most talked-of medical practitioner in the whole State, if not in the whole country. There had come that tide in his affairs which led on to fortune, and he had taken it at the flood. For one afternoon, about a week before, his friend Major Dennison, formerly secretary to the United States' ambassador at London, called him up on the telephone from the Alva Lorraine, then the leading fashionable hotel in Boston, requesting him to come at once to see an English gentleman who was returning from the World's Fair which was then in progress in Chicago; and almost immediately after his arrival, he found himself in the reception room of a luxuriously-furnished suite on the second floor, where he was very graciously received by Mr. Kilgour-Knowles, a tall, distinguished-looking man, apparently about forty-five years of age.

"I am feeling—a—very much indisposed this afternoon," he explained, returning to the couch on which

he had been reclining, but not until after Dr. Russell had taken the chair beside it; "in fact, I haven't felt very well, you know, since I left Chicago."

Although in giving a very minute history of his present trouble, he exercised great self-control, even a man less observing than that brilliant young Cambridge doctor could not fail to notice that he was suffering intensely.

After a very careful examination of the seat of the pain, Dr. Russell pronounced the trouble an acute attack of appendicitis, and advised his patient to take a private ward at the Massachusetts General Hospital, and to secure the services of two trained nurses. "For if your case does not yield to the course of treatment I shall prescribe," he added, "it may be necessary to operate."

"To operate?" queried the sufferer, giving the doctor a look of disappointment.

"Yes," Dr. Russell affirmed, "an operation may be necessary. However," he added, "with your permission I shall call in consultation my old friend and professor, Sir Horace Terrence-Syms, of London, that distinguished surgeon and fellow-countryman of yours, who is now on his way hither from Chicago. He will spend a few days with me, so that if an operation is necessary you may be able to avail yourself of his services, for, in my judgment, he is not only the greatest surgeon in your country, but is perhaps without a peer in the whole world. I had the honour of being his assistant for two years in London, and have

unbounded confidence in his skill. But as I perhaps owe him a deeper debt of gratitude than to any other man living, I hope you will pardon the warmth of my admiration for him."

"No words of praise are extravagant in speaking of Sir Horace, Doctor," said the patient. "And he is really coming! Well," he added thoughtfully, after a pause, "I shall carefully follow your advice and treatment, but shall not consent to an operation until I shall hear what Sir Horace has to say about the matter."

This was perfectly satisfactory to Dr. Russell who at once made arrangements to have Mr. Kilgour-Knowles quietly transferred to the Massachusetts General, for he was convinced that the only hope for his patient lay in a successful operation which could be better performed in a splendidly equipped modern hospital than in a fashionable hotel.

"Do you know whom you have got for a patient?" Major Dennison asked, on entering Dr. Russell's private office that evening.

"Why do you ask?" returned the doctor with an amused expression on his handsome face.

"Only I thought you ought to know—as you are a man of honour and can keep a secret—that your patient is no less an individual than the Duke of Clifton, a wealthy English aristocrat with the blood of kings coursing through his veins—a widower, too, and one of the most popular men in Great Britain. Oh, if the Boston eligibles only knew, wouldn't there

be excitement! His visit to the World's Fair was made *incog.* under the name of Kilgour-Knowles, for he is simple in his tastes and despises publicity and fuss. I had the honour of escorting him around since he came on this side of the water. He is a prince of good fellows, a hearty admirer of our people, and seemed greatly impressed with what he saw of our country."

This disclosure was unnecessary, for the Duke, having the utmost confidence in Dr. Russell's discretion, had already revealed his identity.

That same night, Sir Horace Terrence-Syms arrived; and next morning, Dr. Russell and his distinguished guest, a venerable gentleman about seventy years of age, called on their aristocratic patient at the Massachusetts General.

"Do you think an operation is necessary, Sir Horace?" was one of the first questions the Duke asked.

"Yes, I agree with Dr. Russell in thinking so," the great surgeon answered. "Without an operation the probability is that you shall not recover," he added firmly, "but with a careful operation your chances are excellent."

"As you say, Sir Horace," readily assented the Duke. "But you must perform the operation yourself."

"Then," said the great surgeon who was a prince of men, "you will kindly follow Dr. Russell's treatment, which is excellent, excellent," he repeated; "and to-morrow at eight-thirty I shall operate, as I

agree with my young friend in thinking that it would be unwise to defer the matter beyond that time."

Next morning, however, just as Sir Horace was about to begin operating in the presence of three of the leading surgeons of the city who were at the hospital by invitation, he suddenly became ill, that great and generous heart, which was the cause of his still being in harness when a more selfish man might have retired for a well-earned rest, having grown weak, and that skilful hand which had fought so valiantly against death in the humble cottage, in the crowded tenement, in the great hospital, in the palace, yea, at the very foot of the throne, having failed him for the first time.

"O God!" he cried in anguish. "I am afraid I cannot operate to-day."

He then fainted and had to be carried out of the room.

Mr. Kilgour-Knowles, already under anæsthetic, was in a dangerous condition. An immediate operation was necessary to save his life, and Dr. Russell felt the situation so keenly that he was about to ask one of the surgeons present to take Sir Horace's place, when Miss Sutherland, of the nursing staff of the hospital, a beautiful young Nova Scotia girl, then in charge of the operating-room, whispered—

"Operate yourself, Dr. Russell."

Dr. Russell did operate—and the operation was eminently successful, much to the delight of Sir Horace himself, who was recovering from his sudden attack

of illness which had been wholly due to the fatigue of travelling. Soon the happy news was flashed across to England that Mr. Kilgour-Knowles was out of danger. But the secret of his identity leaked out through the inquisitiveness of an English friend, then in Chicago, and next morning the Boston *Times-Herald* devoted a whole page to the incidents immediately connected with his grace's illness. "The Duke of Clifton Ill at Massachusetts General—Dr. Edwin Russell in Attendance—Sir Horace Terrence-Syms, the Illustrious English Surgeon, Hastily Summoned on his Way Home from Chicago to Perform Dangerous Operation—Sir Horace Faints in Operating-Room—Operation Successfully Performed by Brilliant Young Cambridge Doctor—Careers of the Duke of Clifton, Sir Horace Terrence-Syms, and Dr. Edwin Russell." These were some of the headlines, and this was how Dr. Russell came to be the most talked-of practitioner in the whole State, and why, perhaps, his welcome at Fernwood was even more cordial than usual that evening. He was, indeed, the lion of the hour, and his practice, already large, had grown in a few short days to such an extent that he was obliged to engage the services of an assistant.

Marion heartily rejoiced in her admirer's signal triumph, while Mrs. Thurlow looked forward to a happy day, perhaps in the near future, when the fortunes of the fair admired one and those of her handsome admirer should be united forever. But in one of the busy wards of a great hospital, a beautiful

young nurse, somewhat weary after the hard work of that long day, but with a heart as cheery, as pure, and as unselfish, as the golden sunlight that was pouring in from the west through the long windows, was thinking of the part she had played in what may not be inaptly termed the turning-point—or perhaps it was the crisis—of a gifted young man's career.

That night, too, Marion received a letter from that excellent friend of hers in the West—a letter adding a new complication to a somewhat complicated situation. Was it to be Colonel Gordon or Dr. Russell? That was a question her heart had to answer within the next few days.

CHAPTER XXI.

CURES FOR SEA-SICKNESS.

FAMOUS around Little Village, but not caring to be lionized, Captain Roderick left on a cruise southward almost immediately after Big Flossie's trial and acquittal. When he returned, the following day, he was ready for his next trip to St. Pierre—in fact, he was actually on the way thither.

Alex went with him; and, as the schooner swung seaward after her anchor was raised, the lad's delight knew no bounds. He stood at the stern with Captain Roderick, holding the wheel, too, and longing for the day when he should be a man so that he could be a sailor.

The wind was from the south. After going straight to sea for about two miles, they steered northward; and as they neared Cape North, the wind began to change around towards the west, blowing stronger, the sea getting rough.

Alex soon lost interest in everything, for it was not long after the sea began to get rough till he became oppressed with a strange feeling of loneliness, coupled with an indefinable nervousness—a gid-

diness, a lightheadedness, a dizzy sensation of unsteadiness, quickly followed by a swimming of the head, a vague headache, a sense of tightness in the back of the neck, a disposition to stretch and yawn, and an irresistible drowsiness.

"You better sit in the wind, sonny," advised the kindly old smuggler who knew only too well what was wrong.

Alex then sat on the starboard bulwark, the schooner now leaning low to port under the strong southwest wind which blew in squalls off Cape North. But he was a sick boy! His face would flush, then pale, then flush again. Breath short, breathing laboured, feet cold, pulse weak, finger-nails blue, and cold chills running up and down his back! A strange mingling of sounds filled his ears—the ringing of bells, the bellowing of fog-horns, the shrill tooting of steam whistles! Nor was that all. For now it was a heavy sinking at the pit of his stomach, a feeling of emptiness, a morbid hankering after food; now, a sense of heavy fullness, drowsy faintness, morbid depression; and when he tried to stand, he sank back on the bulwark with a peculiar feeling of drunkenness, and of numbness about his legs, which almost seemed too weak to support his body.

His dinner had been light—only a little fresh lamb, one small potato, a slice of buttered bread, a small piece of dried-apple pie, and a cup of tea. But it would not submit to digestion. The tea's proclivities were peaceful, but the pie-crust was very bellicose

and kept tramping around with its large, awkward feet until it finally caused a general disturbance, which was quickly followed by a rush, and a dash, and a splash, and a very sudden disappearance in the turbulent waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence!

There was now a bitter taste in the poor boy's mouth; his throat was parched, and although his thirst was intense, he had a strange dread of swallowing liquids. The feeling to vomit returned at intervals, distressing as it was, and when all the food in his stomach was gone, retching became very painful. To help to relieve matters, however, Foxy Donald came along with a glass of salt water which had just been taken from the sea, and the poor lad, not having the will power to refuse such a desperate cure for seasickness, drank it almost at a gulp. But it did not do him any good.

"Come down to the cabin with me, sonny," the old smuggler then suggested, "for they's are sayin' that a few licks from a friendly cat 'll cure the worst case of what's wrong with you," and both descended the steep stairway leading down to the cabin, Alex leaning heavily on Captain Roderick for support.

The cabin reached, the sick boy got down on his hands and knees on the floor and some lard was rubbed on his face, whereupon the medical officer of the *Rob Roy* in the person of a stately gray cat, came purring over to where he was; and, after affectionately rubbing itself against its patient's chin a couple of times by way of introduction, proceeded to lick

the lard off his face. But before it was able to finish its massage treatment, its patient was seized with another fit of vomiting, and up came the salt water which landed on the medical officer somewhere about amidships.

"Mew-ow!" it complained. "Phit, phit, phit!" it then exclaimed, in tones which showed how angry it was; and then, with a piously elegant curve on its back, it disappeared under a bunk where it spent the rest of the afternoon in rearranging its toilet.

"Wal—poor sonny," said the kind-hearted old smuggler, "I am turrible sorry you's are feelin' so bad. But they is one remedy yet—the pork remedy—which cured a sick sailor I know'd, after he throw'd up uverything from his breakfast to the kinks and crooks in his soul. Would you's like to try it, sonny?"

"Anything at all," answered the sick boy, "if it'll cure me."

A piece of salty pork was accordingly procured, a fathom of mackerel-line was tied to it, and it was given Alex to swallow. But the feat, being a somewhat difficult one, was only accomplished after several unsuccessful attempts; and when Captain Roderick started to pull the pork up, it caught somewhere. . . . He managed to get it up, however, but when it was once safely up, it remained up, for Alex, after getting tongue, palate, and throat, chafed with the mackerel-line, was loath to repeat the dose, the cure being clearly worse than the disease itself.

Cape North reached, it was necessary for the

schooner to beat up against a head wind along the northeast coast of Cape Breton, and Captain Roderick was called on deck. Alex, feeling more dead than alive, then crawled into a bunk without removing his clothes, and soon lapsed into a profound sleep.

When Aspy Bay was reached, the *Rob Roy* dropped anchor for the night.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE ROB ROY AND THE SPIDER.

AT sunset that evening the *Spider* lay peacefully at anchor in Sydney Harbour. She was somewhat profusely decorated with flags and bunting, for she had just come from Glasgow, Scotland, where she had been expressly built for duty, as a revenue cutter, in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Having received orders from Ottawa to remain at Sydney a day or two, Captain Douglas Blower and his brother officers decided to give an *At Home* to a few of their friends among the élite. Informal invitations were accordingly issued, a caterer was engaged to take charge of serving the refreshments, and Ferrari's Italian Orchestra was hired for the evening.

About half an hour after sundown, boat after boat might be seen going out to the cutter with guests for the *At Home*: and immediately after getting aboard, they were treated—the gentlemen to whiskey or ginger-beer, according to their views on the temperance question; the ladies, to lemonade, claret-punch, or champagne, according as their views on the same question were mild, medium, or strong.

At half-past eight the orchestra struck up Mendels-

sohn's *Spring Song*, which was played in waltz time, and the dancing at once began on the quarter-deck of the *Spider*.

Just then a very unwelcome visitor came aboard—a pretty little messenger boy who handed Captain Blower a code telegram from Ottawa, after the waltz was over; and Captain Blower, going at once to his private cabin, took his code-book and jotted down the following translation:

“Captain Roderick on way to St. Pierre via southern route. Go to Louisburg at once. Watch around there until noon to-morrow, then go to sea towards Miquelon, and surely with a cutter as fleet as the *Spider* you will be able to catch that old sea-dog who has so long outwitted you, for it is high time something were done.”

Short, sweet, and to the point! For Duncan Murdoch, Chief of the Ottawa Intelligence Department, had heard from a private source of the *At Home* on the *Spider*, and not being on good terms with her Captain, took advantage of this excellent opportunity to remind him somewhat forcibly of his duty.

“‘So long outwitted you, for it is high time something were done,’” Captain Blower repeated, locking the telegram and its translation in his desk; then, muttering imprecations which were more forcible than elegant, he returned to the quarter-deck.

The *At Home* broke up in confusion; more ginger-beer, and lemonade, and claret-punch, and whiskey, and champagne, was indulged in; orchestra, caterer,

and guests, left for the shore; and the cutter slowly steamed out of Sydney Harbour.

At daybreak the following morning, the *Rob Roy* weighed anchor and put to sea before a strong westerly breeze; at noon *St. Pierre et Miquelon* loomed up on the eastern horizon; and before nightfall the good old schooner was lashed to a wharf belonging to *Marchand et Cie.*, St. Pierre's leading wholesale liquor-dealers. Nor did the cutter even get sight of her, for Captain Roderick's first going south the day of the trial at Little Village again outwitted the Government officials who thought that instead of going via Cape North he would go via Louisburg—the southern route—and had thus instructed Captain Blower.

Next day, without the slightest knowledge of the fact that he was being pursued, the old smuggler called at Marchand & Company's warehouse and ordered the following: 500 gallons of Demerara rum, in casks of 50 gallons each, at \$1.35 per gallon, \$675.00; 500 gallons of Port wine, in hogsheads of 100 gallons each, at \$1.25 per gallon, \$625.00; 48 dozen bottles of champagne, in cases of 12 bottles each, at \$6.00 per case, \$288.00; 10,000 good Havana cigars, in boxes of 100 each, at \$1.30 per hundred, \$130.00; 10,000 extra good Havana cigars, in boxes of 50 each, at \$2.50 per hundred, \$250.00; 440 lbs. smoking tobacco, in caddies of 22 lbs. each, at \$0.35 per lb., \$154.00; 400 lbs. French cut tobacco, in quarter-pound packages, at \$0.25 per lb., \$100.00,

making a total of \$2,222.00, which was paid in gold. On this order the Canadian import duty would be about \$3,778.00, making the cargo worth at least about \$6,000.00, landed in Cape Breton, so that if this trip were successful, it promised to be the most profitable of the old smuggler's whole career.

At daybreak the following morning Foxy Donald and Yankee Bob were given orders to get the schooner under weigh, and they at once proceeded to change her name from *Rob Roy, Halifax, N. S.*, to *Eagle, Gloucester, Mass.*, by removing a couple of boards at the stern and replacing them with a couple of others the same size and shape. With an American flag floating from her mast-head, the *Eagle* left port, not long afterwards, first going due south for a short distance, then southwest, for Captain Roderick thought that the wind would change around to the south later on in the day. But he was mistaken, for, early in the afternoon, instead of changing to the south, it came around to the northeast, and blew in squalls with rain, whereupon he at once changed his course, steering almost due northeast; and although the sea grew rough, and still rougher, yet the good old schooner sped on, pitching heavily.

About two o'clock the sun came out hot, and it seemed as if the wind were going to die away. But half an hour later the lynx-eyed old smuggler saw the black course of a squall coming over the waves. He at once tried to turn the schooner up in the wind, but noticing that she was slow to obey the rudder, not

having sufficient speed to come up quickly, he shouted—

“Let go your jib and fore sheets!”

Foxy Donald and Yankee Bob at once let them go. But, as ill luck would have it, the main-sheet happened to be tightly caught, and before Captain Roderick could get it free the squall struck the *Eagle*, breaking the main-mast off at the boom saddle and snapping maintop-stay, halyards, and starboard shrouds. The wreckage fell heavily into the sea on the port side, jib and fore-sail flapped loudly in the wind, and the schooner stopped, pitching heavily.

Early that morning a long, fleet, black craft, with a huge smoke-stack, left Louisburg, making almost directly for the island of Miquelon; but she changed her course about midday, after sighting about twenty-five miles to the north, a fast-sailing schooner flying the American flag.

Inside of an hour after the squall had struck the *Eagle*, and just as her crew were after getting the wreckage out of the water, along came the *Spider* at full speed.

“Are you disabled?” asked Captain Blower, poking his head out of the wheel-house window as the cutter came sharply around to leeward of the schooner.

“A little,” answered the old smuggler.

“Then, you’d better throw us a tow-line,” advised the Captain of the *Spider*, “and we’ll give you a tow.”

"It looks as if we're ketched," said Captain Roderick to himself, but shrewd old sea-dog that he was, he stopped to think for a moment, for he knew full well that if he were once taken in tow he would then be in the hands of the merciless officers he had so long outwitted. Quick as lightning the outline of a bold scheme flashed through his mind, and, going to the bow of the *Eagle*, he threw a long tow-line which was caught by one of the cutter's deck-hands and made fast.

The *Spider* had slackened speed as she came up to the schooner, but now plunged through the waves, great rolls of black smoke coming out of her huge smoke-stack. She had to report for orders at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, the following day, and thither Captain Blower made, going by way of Cape North which was not much more than a hundred miles distant.

"Well, Captain," said Herbert Moore, First Officer of the *Spider*, "we've got the Fiend from Bras d'Or at last."

"Yes, but the old sea-devil beat us for a long time," replied Captain Blower. "We could never catch him with the *Otter*."

"No, nor with the *Spider*," declared Moore, "if the *Rob Roy* didn't meet with a mishap."

"That isn't the *Rob Roy*," Captain Blower objected. "That's the *Eagle*."

"Call her *Eagle* if you like," replied Moore, "she's the same old craft that has enabled Captain Roderick

to defy us for years. I know her from keel to topmast, Captain. Look at that old snout," he added, pointing to the schooner's bow. "Why, I'd know that old snout anywhere."

"Well, board the old craft with a couple of men the first opportunity," suggested Captain Blower, "and have a look at her papers."

"All right," agreed Moore, but it was then too rough to make any attempt in that direction.

The evening passed quickly, the sun sank to his place of rest behind a huge bank of black clouds, and a brief uncertain twilight was soon followed by a darkness that was both inky and impenetrable on account of a dense fog having come up after sunset.

Gloomy, watchful, silent, the old smuggler sat at the wheel listening, until, at length, about ten o'clock he heard the great Cape North fog-horn, then only nine miles distant to the south.

"Wal—so far!" he said to himself, whipping a knife out of his pocket and going quietly to the bow of the *Eagle*. "And so far," he added, cutting the bow-line and setting the schooner free, "is far enough whatever."

Just then the *Spider* changed her course to almost due south, Captain Roderick steering westward, and as the distance quickly lengthened between *Spider* and *Eagle*, he soon had the satisfaction of seeing the cutter's lights disappear in the thickening haze.

CHAPTER XXIII.

TEMPEST-TOSSED.

THE wind died away about midnight, and all on board the *Eagle* retired to their respective bunks save Hurricane Bob, who remained on duty at the wheel until three o'clock, when he was relieved by the old smuggler himself.

Early that morning the sun came out brightly, a fresh breeze sprang up from the east, and a beautiful rainbow spanned the space between a sulky lowering cloud and the restless sea.

"I nuver liked a rainbow in the mornin'," Captain Roderick declared, after taking a careful look around the sky.

It was his intention to reach, before nightfall, if possible, a harbour on the west coast of Cape Breton. But beating against the wind was slow work, for the schooner, on account of losing her main-sail, could not use her jib, and consequently only made very slow headway under fore-sail alone.

The wind kept changing: at midday it was north-east, but at three o'clock in the afternoon it was due northwest, and blew in squalls.

Sailing well before a stiff breeze, the *Eagle* was

now about thirty miles off Cape Breton in a north-westerly direction, her Captain hoping to reach shelter before the sea should get too rough; for, shrewd old sea-dog that he was, he well knew that before nightfall it would be difficult even for a schooner that was not disabled to live in the storm that was brewing.

The *Spider* had got in to Charlottetown about five o'clock that morning, her entire crew, from Captain down, feeling very discomfited over Captain Roderick's having cut the tow-line, unknown to them, while they were yet on the high seas. In fact, so keenly did Captain Blower feel his failure to keep sight of the wily old outlaw who had so long outwitted him, that he resolved to risk life and cutter, if need be, in a supreme effort to capture the *Eagle* and her crew, who, with their lame duck, he now believed, were in Canadian waters. He knew that a storm was coming, for the storm-drums were up. But he was humiliated, and reckless, and angry, and did not seem either to fear or to care. At nine o'clock he left Charlottetown, first going east, then, north, until, at four o'clock in the afternoon, he sighted the *Eagle* about eighteen miles distant, and made in her direction at full speed.

At five o'clock the sun disappeared, and the sky became dark and scowling—almost as black as night. A sudden squall struck the *Eagle*. She sprang up on the crest of a wave as if some cruel and deadly enemy were after her, then plunged into the trough of

the sea, shuddering all the while as if held in some hell-monster's teeth; and the wind, pitiless and angry, with a loud whistling sound which could be heard above the roar of the sea, tore her fore-sail into shreds. The gaff struck her port bow with a thud, and as it did, that same merciless king of force—half-brother to the lightning and cousin to the earthquake and flood—gave a low, hideous moan as if in mocking derision of her helpless condition.

Just then the *Spider* plunged past her.

"Throw us your tow-line, you old outlaw!" shouted Captain Blower from the wheel-house of the cutter.

"Take your time," replied Captain Roderick.

"'Take your time,'" repeated Captain Blower; "a pretty saucy answer, too, from a man in your peril."

But the lynx-eyed old sea-dog only peered through the fast-thickening gloom, his weather-beaten face lighting up with hope as he spied land about twenty miles to the east. He was now determined, at all hazards, to escape capture by running the schooner ashore some place where there were no rocks.

"Which of you's," he asked, addressing Foxy Donald and Hurricane Bob, "'ll run up the port shrouds and put that jib halyard back through the block at the fore-mast head?"

"Me," answered Foxy Donald, eager to do anything and everything possible to enable them to escape capture.

But before Foxy Donald had time to look around,

Yankee Bob ran out on the foot-rope at the bowsprit, and got hold of the halyard which had fallen into the water; and although the *Eagle* was pounding heavily and the Gloucester lad's clothes were drenched through and through, he was not afraid, for, taking the halyard in his teeth, he fearlessly scampered up the port shrouds, and, after putting it through the block, descended by way of the jib-stay; then, walking boldly in on the bowsprit, he fastened the end of the halyard to a pin on the port side.

"Bravely done, my lad!" shouted Captain Blower who had been watching him. "There's good stuff in you, all right."

"Up with the sail now!" Captain Roderick commanded.

And Hurricane Bob quickly hoisted the jib which at once began to flap fiercely in the mad wind.

"Throw us your tow-line, you old sea-devil!" shouted Moore as the *Spider* again plunged past them. "Your tow-line, or we'll send you to the bottom."

The old smuggler paid no attention to him.

"Fire!" commanded Captain Blower, and the *Spider* began firing.

But if Captain Blower thought that a few shots from a twelve-pounder would make the *Eagle* surrender, he was greatly mistaken in the man he had to deal with. For the sea was so rough that it was impossible for men from the cutter to board the schooner, and besides, it was almost impossible for them to hit her with their guns.

"Cowards!" Captain Roderick shouted defiantly. "Cowards, cowards!" he repeated as the jib sheet was hauled in, and the schooner swung to leeward, pitching heavily all the while.

But no sooner had her jib filled than a squall struck her—and she sprang up on the crest of a huge wave, then plunged into the trough of the sea. Up she again sprang on the crest of the next wave with accelerating speed, and down she again plunged into the next trough. The wind blew stronger and stronger, yet the fiercer it blew and the louder it piped, the faster the *Eagle* flew over the stormy sea.

One useless shot after another was fired from the deck of the *Spider* which made after her at full speed, but nothing driven by steam, nothing afloat, could overtake her now; and as the distance lengthened, lengthened, lengthened, between pursuer and pursued, Captain Blower, disgruntled, again outwitted, again beaten, became discouraged, gave up the chase, and made directly for Souris, a splendid port of shelter on the east side of Prince Edward Island.

The sulky sun, after hiding his face all the evening, sank to his place of rest behind a huge bank of black clouds at the western horizon. There then followed a brief twilight, then darkness, inky and impenetrable, then—all was gloom. Still, the schooner sped on to leeward, and early in the night three lights, in the shape of a V, appeared in the distance, off her bow.

"The wedge!" cried the lynx-eyed old sea-dog, pointing towards the shore which was several miles

away. "Malcolm Allan Sandy's light at the shore, the Widow Hector's on the hill to the left, and Big Murdock's, on the hill to the right. Hurrah for Long Beach Sands—the smuggler's freight-shed!"

"Hark! . . . Is that thunder?" asked Alex.

A sullen boom along the sky was his only answer.

Presently a bright flash of lightning showed the outlines of the *Eagle* plunging in the mad waves; then, like a spectre, she vanished into gloom. A long, low, growling thunder followed. Again the lightning flashed and again the thunder boomed above the dread roar of the sea: still, on, on, on, the schooner sped, with the fleetness of a frigate-bird; on, and yet on, she plunged, now on the crest of a wave, now in the trough of the sea. The wedge of light grew larger and larger as she hurried shoreward, until, at length, Captain Roderick could distinctly hear the loud murmur of the waves as they spent their force on the long sand-beach.

The thunder seemed to cease for a brief space, but began again, a vivid flash of lightning revealing the shore, now less than a hundred yards distant, and the schooner, now mounting the crest of a gigantic wave. A blinding darkness instantly followed. . . . The *Eagle* plunged—struck the beach, and ploughed a huge furrow in the sand; and, when the great wave receded, she leaned heavily to starboard, almost completely dismantled, but safe beyond the reach of the angry sea.

Glad shouts went up from her crew, who, after

lowering her jib, and lashing it to the bowsprit, dropped one after another from her deck on the drifting sand.

Their shouting was heard by Malcolm Allan Sandy, a kind-hearted old widower living in a cabin near by with his two sons, who, like himself, followed the avocation of fishing.

"What's that?" asked the old fisherman.

"Some one in distress," answered one of his sons.

"Then, let's see if we can be of any help," suggested the father, and they all went down to the beach where they met their old friend.

Under cover of the darkness a huge hole was dug in the sand, and the *Eagle's* cargo was carefully lowered into it and covered up. The wind still blew with terrific force, and the sand kept drifting over the spot, so that before very long it was impossible for anyone to tell that so large and valuable a cargo had been buried there.

Now overflowing with gratitude towards the old fisherman and his sons, Captain Roderick presented each of them with a case of champagne and a box of the choicest Havana cigars.

"It's too much," was the old man's protest, for he did not want to take anything.

"It's little enough," said the old smuggler, "for those that'll look after the cargo without betrayin' me."

"Indeed and indeed, Captain," said the old fisherman earnestly, "the cargo will be safe in the sand;

as for you, my dear old friend, remember that the descendants of those who braved death or exile rather than betray bonnie Prince Charlie will not go back on one of their own. No, Captain Roderick, no," he added, his deep, resonant voice ringing out in defiance of the hoarse roar of the sea, "there is enough of the old blood—of the old chivalrous instinct—in us yet, not to be doing that. Better death a thousand times than that any one should ever cast up to poor old Malcolm Allan Sandy, or to his children, or to his children's children, that he ever betrayed a trust or violated the confidence of a good old friend. *Never!*" he shouted fiercely. "NEVER!"

"NEVER!" the very sea seemed to roar as they made their way towards the little old house near by.

"The accommodations aren't much," the old fisherman apologized, as he opened the door, "but to such as they are you are always welcome."

A fire was kindled in the old-fashioned fire-place in the kitchen, a table was spread with a very generous share of such humble fare as a fisherman's cabin afforded, and stories were told until a late hour, when, on the floor in front of the fire-place, a bed of sheep-skin rugs was spread for the storm-tossed guests from ~~the~~ *Eagle*.

CHAPTER XXIV.

GRANDFATHER GOES HOME.

THIS was Friday. . . . In the morning Grandfather strolled over to Angus the Horse-trader's as usual, remaining for dinner and after dinner having his customary nap. He did not return to Little Village in the afternoon, though, as it was very stormy, preferring to remain at his older daughter's, where he spent a restless, sleepless night. He was up early the following morning, but refused to take any nourishment, and seemed to lose all interest in what went on.

He was sitting in a large arm-chair in the front room, his kindly brown eyes fixed on the sea, restless and sailless, as if every instant he expected to see the *Rob Roy* loom up on the distant horizon. He spoke but little, very, very little—and when he did, it was nearly always a pitiful expression of longing to see his grandson that escaped his lips.

"Oh, how I wish the poor little fellow would come!" he would often say to his daughter. "For I am afraid," he would sometimes add, "I shall soon be taken hence."

He was lonely, and sad, and grief-stricken, too,

for he feared that the *Rob Roy* was lost in the storm that had come up so suddenly the day before.

"Will my little boy come?" he sighed at length, his eyes still fixed on the sea. "Will he come—before I go away forever?"

There was no answer—no answer from the wind, or from the white-capped waves, or from the cruel sea itself, all of which were mute as to the whereabouts of the absent boy.

Early that morning a messenger was sent to Little Village, and about ten o'clock the door of Grandfather's room was gently opened, the Squire's wife entering, followed by her husband.

"Catherine, Catherine, my child!" he exclaimed, turning his dim eyes towards the door. "Catherine, Catherine," he repeated in a low harsh tone, for his voice had a hollow, deathlike rattle.

"Poor father," she said softly, "I am afraid you are very ill."

"I am dying, Catherine, dying," he declared. "But where's your son Alex?" he asked quickly. "Where is our little boy? Will he come—before I go hence forever?"

"He will surely come, father," she made answer, although she only hoped—she did not know.

"Come?" queried the dying man. "Ah," he added sadly, "I am afraid he will be too late."

"Would you like to see Father Jo to-day?" she then asked.

"Yes, my child, yes," he answered quickly, "if

the poor young man is able to visit me," he added thoughtfully, for their parish-priest was in the last stages of consumption, inherited from both parents, and might not be able to come so far.

A messenger was at once sent to Big Village. At about two o'clock in the afternoon Father Joseph came, and after tying his horse to the fence, he walked slowly up to the house, pausing for breath at the door where he was met by the Squire's wife who at once took him to the room where her aged father sat—and there she left them.

"Oh, Father Jo!" cried Grandfather, making an effort to rise from his chair, but his strength failed him.

"Keep your seat, my dear old friend," said the priest, sitting beside him; "keep your seat."

Smiling assent, the grand old man almost instinctively produced that familiar old snuff-box which he had brought with him from Scotland when he first crossed the ocean—yes, old and familiar, and polished, too, on account of long use, and carrying with it many fond memories of departed friends with whom its venerable owner hoped to be very soon, for he steadfastly believed they one and all awaited his coming in that happier, better land beyond the golden sunset—beyond the evening beauty of the western sky.

"I see there is not very much snuff left, Father Jo," he said sadly, after removing the lid, "but there is enough, I think, to do me till I go."

"Thank you," said the priest, after taking a pinch of that good old stuff which he had grown to like; and Grandfather, after helping himself, replaced the old snuff-box in his waistcoat pocket.

Father Joseph then closed the room door, and, putting on his surplice and stole, administered the last consolations of the Church, an humble and devout member of which the venerable Scotsman had been all his life. When the time came for the priest to leave, his eyes were dim with tears, and a strange, sweet, fascinating sadness seemed to mantle his pale, thin face.

"Be of good cheer, my dear old friend," he said—and there was a melting sweetness in his kind, sad voice. "You have lived a good life. You were a good husband, a kind father, an exemplary citizen, and a very dear friend of mine. 'Tis true you are dying far, far from dear old Scotland, the land of the thistle and heather, the land of your birth. But God is everywhere, so that it does not matter where we see Him first. . . . I shall not be long after you—perhaps only a few days, a few weeks at most, and perhaps I shall be called home before you go. But what difference does it make as long as we shall all meet again, to live forever in that thrice-happy, thrice-blessed kingdom of fadeless, eternal day; wherein neither sorrow nor death can enter; where there shall be no more bitter partings, and where nothing but perfect love, perfect peace, and perfect happiness, shall be our portion for evermore?"

"How happy we shall then be!" cried the aged man, in ecstasy.

"Farewell, then, dear old friend, farewell!" sobbed the priest as he took the chill hand of his dying friend.

"Farewell," said the grand old Scotsman softly. "Farewell."

They parted thus, never to meet on earth again, for the kind-hearted little priest had a fatal hemorrhage almost immediately after getting home and died ere the close of the following week.

The news of Grandfather's illness had spread rapidly around Big Village, finally reaching Maple Hill where lived a most lovable old man—Arasaig Donald or Donald Arasaig who came from Arasaig, Scotland, and had a surname once. But most people seemed to have forgotten that he had one, if they ever knew.

"Can it be possible that dear old Grandfather is so ill?" he asked, wringing his hands.

"Yes," answered his gentle wife, "they say he is dying. Father Joseph was called to see him, so that his condition must be considered very serious. I am sure he would be glad to see you, too," she added thoughtfully; "you were always such great friends."

"I shall go," said Donald sadly, "for the poor old man would come to see me if I were ill."

Ordering his horse, he at once proceeded to Angus the Horse-trader's where he met Father Joseph just as the latter was coming out of the house by way of the kitchen door.

"Good-afternoon, Donald," said the priest pleasantly, extending his hand.

"Good-afternoon, my dear young man."

"You no doubt came to see your old friend?"

"Yes, Father Joseph," Arasaig Donald assented, tears coming into his kindly blue eyes. "And how is he?"

"Dying," the priest answered sadly. "So you had better go in to see him at once, for he may not last long."

Donald Arasaig forthwith entered the house.

"What a noble-hearted old man Donald is!" said the priest to himself as he drove homeward. "And what a beautiful, touching friendship has existed between those two dear old souls! One of those rare old-time friendships that grows, and grows, and grows, as the years flit by—a friendship over which death itself seems to have no power!"

Meanwhile Donald had been graciously received by the Squire's wife who at once admitted him to the room where her aged father sat, his face radiant with happiness as he calmly awaited his fast-approaching end.

"Go right in, Donald, if you please," she said. "You will find father sitting at the window."

Grandfather heard them coming, and turned his happy face towards the opening door.

"Oh, my dear old friend!" he cried, again making an effort to rise from his seat, but he again fell back helplessly into his chair.

"My own dear friend!" said Donald, large tears coursing down his cheeks as he took the feebly extended hand of his venerable fellow-countryman and sat down beside him.

"How—can I—thank you—for your kindness—in coming—to see me?" Grandfather faltered, a little out of breath.

"How could I stay away, my dear old friend?" Donald answered, in that kind way peculiarly his own. "How could I help coming to see one whose golden friendship, extending over a long period of years, has lit up so many, so very many, of perhaps the most darksome hours of my life? How could I ever forget your kindness and your sympathy when I lost poor little Jimmie, my only boy?"

This gracious reference to their unbroken friendship of years and to that lovely, little, fair-haired, five-year-old boy who was drowned so many years before, deeply touched the world-weary heart of the dying man, who, sobbing once or twice, almost instinctively felt for his old snuff-box which he once again took from his pocket.

"Have a little, Donald," he said, after removing the lid.

"And that's the good old stuff," old Arasaig declared, taking a pinch.

"Not much left," said Grandfather, "but enough, I suppose, to do me the little time I am here. . . . Yes, my dear old friend," he added, replacing in his waistcoat pocket that old, old snuff-box which had done

its work so long, so faithfully, and so well, "it was indeed kind of you to come to see me. We were always friends. We met friends, long, long ago, and we shall soon part—friends, too. I shall soon meet your gentle, fair-haired Jimmie—I shall soon see your lovely little boy—and the first thing I shall tell him is that his own dear father came to see me before I died. Yes, yes," repeated the dying man, "we were always good friends, although we did differ a little in politics. But we agreed in our differing, each respecting the honest, sincere convictions of the other."

"Yes, thank God, we were always the best of friends," sobbed Donald, who could not trust himself to refer again to his little boy. "We have discussed many things, and have differed widely in most of our views. But each of us has always respected the other's feelings and convictions, and we always came out of our little discussions with a greater admiration for each other and with the bonds of friendship stronger than ever. It is too bad that such men as you should ever die."

"Oh, no, my dear old friend," said the aged Scotsman, in that gracious way which had distinguished him throughout life, "you are forgetting for the moment that man does not die, but lives—beyond. What we mortals call death is not real death at all; it is only the beginning of life—of a real life that is everlasting!"

"Ah, yes, that is true," Donald Arasaig assented, "but we have to part here below—"

"To meet in heaven," added the dying man. "Heaven is large enough for us all, dear friend; for political heretics as well as those of the true political faith."

"Well," old Arasaig declared, "I believe a good Scotsman will be all right whatever, even if he does belong to the wrong side of politics."

"That's what you always said," commented the dying man, his waxen face lighting up with a bright smile.

"I must now give way to your own near and dear relatives," sobbed Donald, rising from his seat and taking the grand old man's hand. "I would gladly stay longer, but must not, so farewell. We have met friends, long, long ago, in that dear old land beyond the sea; we have been life-long friends, and we now part, friends—good, true friends to the last. Tell Jimmie—"

But he could go no further, for he completely broke down.

"Farewell, dear friend, farewell!" said the dying Scotsman, in a sad tone of voice, mellowed with a strange, fascinating sweetness. "All things human shall pass—shall end. But we shall meet again—in heaven. Oh, yes, we shall meet, dear friend—you and I and little Jimmie—in our long, lasting, eternal home!"

Both then remained silent, each with head bent over their firmly clasped hands. Their mingled tears fell on this farewell and heart-rending grasp; and bitter

tears they were—friendship's mute tribute to the last parting of friends! When the aged Scotsman relaxed his feeble grasp, Donald Arasaig withdrew from the room and left the house as he had entered it by way of the kitchen door. He could not speak to any one so affected was he by the parting, and in passing through the kitchen, had to bury his face in his handkerchief. He thus hid his tears, but he could not stifle the sobs that rose unbidden in his breast.

After breakfast that morning, Malcolm Allan Sandy very kindly offered to drive Alex to Little Village. But the old fisherman had more passengers than he expected, for Captain Roderick, Foxy Donald, and Hurricane Bob all wanted to go, so that it was therefore necessary for him to nail two boards across the top of his box-cart in order to accommodate all his passengers with seats.

As the way was long, the road rough, and the horse slow, it was six-thirty that evening when the box-cart party reached Little Village, where Alex was met by a messenger and at once taken to his aunt's house.

"Father has been longing to see you, my dear," said his mother who wept for joy at seeing him back again, "so you had better go right down to the front room where he is."

"All right, mother," said the lad, who, on entering the room designated, found Grandfather praying, with dim eyes fixed on the sea which was after growing calm.

"My dear little boy," said the dying Scotsman softly, caressing the lad's curls with his cold, trembling hand. "I was afraid," he added, as the lad knelt on one knee beside him, "afraid that you would not come. Did you have a pleasant trip?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Where is the *Rob Roy*?"

"Safe."

"And Captain Roderick?"

"Safe and well."

"Thank God!" exclaimed the aged Scotsman. "But I was afraid you would not come, for I have something to tell you. I am leaving you nearly all that in my long life I managed to save, and I want it spent on your education. . . . Always be manly and generous, lad; let your every step be measured by the golden reed of honour, and let your guide be virtue, austere and lowly."

So overwhelmed was Alex with a bitter sense of loss that he could not utter a word; he could only weep, and weep he did, poor boy, as if his heart would break.

"Let us pray a little together," said the dying Scotsman who was praying when his grandson entered the room. "Our Father," he then resumed, in his beloved Gaelic, "Our Father—Who art in heaven—hallowed be Thy name—Thy kingdom come—"

Thy kingdom come! . . . The sun was now low in the western sky, and sent floods of light across the dark-blue waters of the still Gulf by a broadening path—

way—a pathway gilded with lustrous gold. The radiant face of the aged Scotsman reflected all the glory of that glorious sunset, and a fascinating glow of happiness stole over his waxen features as his mind wandered in a pleasant day-dream—back, back to Scotland, the land of the thistle and heather, the land of his birth. For once again he was young—standing on a heath-clad moor near a stile on which his love was sitting; and stooping down, he picked up a sprig of white heather which his bonnie Jessie of Bower kissed and accepted, his mind then quickly wandering to the altar of that little chapel in the Highlands where two fond hearts were made one. Once again he crossed the stormy Atlantic in a small schooner, and, after three months of ocean-tossing, landed in Cape Breton with his lovely bride. He then dreamt of his early struggles for bread at Little Village where his gentle wife died after giving birth to her second child Catherine; and he looked over the sea—along that glorious, golden pathway which led to the setting sun—as if he expected to see his bonnie Jessie on her way to meet him.

“Thy kingdom come!” he then exclaimed. “Thy kingdom come!” he repeated. “Thy will be done—on earth—as it is—in heaven!”

In heaven, yes, in heaven! . . . The sun was fast sinking beneath the western horizon, and the golden pathway that led over the calm sea, narrowed as the sun sank lower and lower to its place of rest. The last rays shone through the window on the happy

face of the dying Scotsman who almost seemed to hear the invisible choirs singing. And with a sigh, so soft as scarcely to be heard, he closed his kindly brown eyes. Two large tears then left their sources, rolling slowly down his withered cheeks; and bright, sparkling tears they were—a worn-out body's last farewell to its immortal tenant—to an imperishable spirit that fled from gathering darkness to never-ending light.

Wondering why Alex was not returning, his mother went down the long hall which led from the kitchen to the front of the house, and opening the door of the room softly, beheld her aged father, pale and motionless, one hand fondly holding his beads, the other resting on the shoulder of her son who was kneeling by. She could not be mistaken—it was death. The sun had already set; its glorious brightness, reflected by the western sky, began slowly to fade, and the shadows of eventide were slowly creeping into the room as she entered it. Taking into her warm hand the cold one that rested on her son's shoulder, she looked into the calm, silent, happy face. There could be no possibility of doubt—it was death.

“Father,” she called gently. “Father,” she repeated. There was no answer—no answer from those pale, thin lips. “Father,” she whispered softly as she dropped his lifeless hand, but her aged father was with her mother, on the golden strand at the farther side of a far-off sea.

CHAPTER XXV.

AT THE WAKE-HOUSE.

A MERRY group of young men and young women had gathered at the Squire's shop, which they found locked, a few of them evidently intending to make some purchases before Sunday. They could not be seen very distinctly, for it was quite dark; but they could be heard, for they were somewhat boisterous, having no doubt decided to remain for a while to discuss current events.

"Well," said a new arrival from the south, joining the group, "Straight Angie is gone. Time, too," he added, "for he was awful old; and besides, he had lots of time to make his soul."

"And he died at last!" one of the young men exclaimed. "Well," he added thoughtlessly, "that's good. We'll have an old-fashioned wake, for you bet the Squire'll bury the old fellow decent."

"I have been waiting for Straight Angie's wake for the last five—yes, and ten years," declared one of the young women.

"Well, we'll have it now," said another, "although it was a long time coming."

This was the tone of their conversation—one of marked levity and disrespect to the venerable dead. But they meant no harm by it.

Meanwhile preparations were being made for the wake at Angus the Horse-trader's. A sheep was caught and killed, Little Peggie Young John was given charge of the cooking, and the Squire went after Mr. Big Duncan the Grave-digger, who was the nearest approach to an undertaker that Little Village possessed—and after Mr. Justice Big Donald the Blacksmith who was to accompany him to his shop and help select articles necessary for the respectable burial of the venerated dead.

A number of people had already gathered at the wake-house. Nor did it take the old smuggler and his friends long to find their way thither. But as they had to walk from Little Village, it was considerably after ten o'clock before they arrived.

"Turrible about Grandfather, sonny?" said Captain Roderick, on entering the kitchen. "Sorry for your trouble—and did he die hard?"

"No," answered the lad; "I thought he was only going to sleep, he died so easy."

"He died the death of an honest man," the old sea-dog declared. "It ain't hard to tell an honest man when he's dyin'—he dies so easy. But with a dishonest man it's different. Why," he went on to illustrate, "when old Rory the Bones was dyin'—I mean the old duvil of a merchant that used to charge a cow and a dollar for a barrel of corn-meal—they are

sayin' he groaned, and twisted, and squirmed, and near kicked the foot out of the bed when he was reachin' out to kick the old and well-know'd bucket. Heigh-ho!" he then sighed, sinking into the chair offered him by Alex.

At eleven-thirty a messenger came with a beautiful brown shroud in which the aged Scotsman's corse was first wrapped, then laid out on the bier which the Squire and the village blacksmith had prepared for it, and as the old-fashioned clock on the mantel-piece slowly struck the hour of twelve, all in the house were called into the corse-room where prayers were said.

Prayers over, a hot supper was served; and supper over, the wake-guests began to scatter, some of them going home.

Big Donald the Blacksmith and Captain Roderick were now alone in the sitting-room.

"Give us a good story, Captain," said the former, after lighting his pipe.

"Was I uver tellin' you's about my trip to the North Pole in the *Rob Roy* with some old friends?" the old sea-dog asked, with a mischievous twinkle in his eyes; and on receiving a negative answer to his question, proceeded to describe the preparations made and the route taken. "At the head of Baffin Bay," he continued, "we got froze up in the ice, so that we had to buy an outfit of grub, dogs, seal-skin clothes, cetera, from a diminutive kind of people inhabitin' the Northland, and called Esquimos. I may

mention as I go that they were so small that it would take five or six of them melted together to make any kind of a decent Big Frog Ponder. Wal—after gettin' stuck in the ice, we drove up hill against the wind till all the hair froze off the dogs and they perished from the cold. But as we was then only a short piece from what they's are callin' the North Pole, we started walkin'; and when we arrived t'ither, there was no pole stickin' up at all: they was only a hole—a round hole about four feet wide."

"A hole!" cried Mr. Justice Big Donald the Blacksmith excitedly.

"A hole," the old smuggler repeated, "a round uvery-day hole about four feet wide."

"Well," said the learned Puisne Judge of the Supreme Court of Little Village, now burning with indignation, "but the lies people will be telling about the North Pole, and there is no pole at all."

"Only a hole, my friend!"

"And what was in this hole?"

"'Most uverything," answered the old sea-dog. "They was old moons consistin' of old new-moons, old first-quarters, old last-quarters, old dark-of-the-moons, old honeymoons, old stars, cetera; fact, it was full of old sky furniture, this junk-shop of the universe. The old dark-of-the-moons was ugly enough, heaven knows, but it was the old honeymoons that took the look off my old and well-knowed face. They was simply duvilish. Of course they was only for usin' *pro tem.*, and as soon as the cheap wash of

bogus polish wore off, they was dumped foruver into that accommodatin' hole."

"Was there anything else peculiar about that hole?" asked the blacksmith.

"Indeed, and there was," the old smuggler answered. "The four winds of heaven blow'd from it; fact, I nuver felt such a draught in my life. For when we got tired and wanted to get back south again, we simply backed our sleds up as near to the hole as we could get, and, the draught givin' us a good start, we coasted back to the schooner—all down hill, too, for the world, as you know, is round like a globe or ball."

"Round like a globe or ball?" repeated the astonished blacksmith. "Nonsense, Captain. The world isn't round, but is as flat as a pancake."

"Stand on that hill behind this very house with a spy-glass," the old smuggler argued, "and watch a vessel comin' over the Gulf. First you's can only see the top-mast; then, the masts, sails, cetera; and p'r'aps you's'll be lookin' half a day before you's can see the whole business. That surely proves that they's some kind of a hump on the world."

"Nonsense, nonsense, nonsense!" cried the blacksmith, who was not open to conviction on this point.

"It is round whatuver," Captain Roderick persisted.

"It is not round," the village blacksmith stoutly maintained. "If it was," he argued, "the sea, the ocean—all the water on the earth would run off."

"Wal," said the old smuggler, "that sounds quare to one who was all over the world. Why, they is people livin' in Australia with their feet up like flies on the ceiling, and Australia is at the other side of the earth—right down through. The people of Australia think that we's are doin' the same. Some of us'd fall off, too, only the bottomless pits is in the centre of the earth, and by our fallen nature we's are all gravitatin' that way, goin' feet first. Of course that kind of goin' is too slow for some people, because they often turn 'round, after travellin' considerable, and go the balance of the way head first."

"The world is flat," persisted the blacksmith. "There is an edge to the world; there is an edge to everything—even to an axe without an edge."

"Wal," drawled the old sea-dog, "it looks as if there was more of a hump than an edge on your wits whatever," which considerably angered the good-natured blacksmith.

"Well, Captain," was his parting benediction, before leaving the room, "I hope that the next time you go to the edge of the world you will drop off and keep going. It is the only place for you."

"Wal," said the old sea-dog to himself, "that's one quare specimen. Yarn all day, and he'll believe you's, but just start in tellin' the truth for a couple of minutes and you'll have him madder than blazes. It's strange, too, what a quare effect the truth has on some people's nerves,"

CHAPTER XXVI.

A GOOD GHOST-STORY.

THE next day was Sunday. There was no service at Little Village, and all day long people came from far and near to Angus the Horse-trader's, to pay their respects to the venerable dead. But it was not until late in the evening that Malcolm the Wake-bird—or Malcolm the Wake-hawk as some uncharitable people called him—made his appearance. He lived about fourteen miles from the wake-house, and it was not until long after midday that he had heard there was to be a wake that night, some place, he was told, near Little Village. He could not find out who had died; nor did he wait to make many inquiries, but at once called his brood of nine together; and, picking out the six oldest, whose ages ranged from seven to sixteen, he made off for Little Village, followed, of course, by two of his dogs. He had not gone far, however, when he met a friend of Grist-mill Nancy's who informed him that Grandfather had died at Angus the Horse-trader's, whither this covey of wake-birds repaired with all possible speed. And when it was beginning to grow dark, with sore feet and ravenous appetites they arrived at the wake-house. They were

at once taken to the dining-room by Little Peggie Young John who gave them a generous supper of cold mutton, ham, bread, cheese, pie, cake, cookies, and hot tea, a fresh quantity of which she had put to steep as soon as the veterans arrived.

There was nothing eventful the first part of the night. The usual custom at wakes in that part of the country, was to serve midnight supper first and then have prayers immediately after. But as there was such a crowd of people at this wake it was thought best to have prayers first and supper afterwards, so that the men who were going to make the coffin and dig the grave would not be unnecessarily delayed. Accordingly, prayers over, supper was announced shortly after midnight, and into the dining-room rushed Malcolm the Wake-bird with his children, taking possession of one end of the table. Big Donald the Blacksmith, Malcolm Allan Sandy, Captain Roderick, Foxy Donald, Hurricane Bob, and Big Duncan the Grave-digger, took places at the other end, for immediately after supper the three former were going to work at the coffin, the three latter, to dig the grave.

"Marthie," said the self-possessed old wake-bird, with paternal tenderness, after he had helped himself to a generous quantity of everything on the table, "have some meat, dear; Florie, you take some more ham; Peggie, help yourself to some pie; Nancy, you take some cake; Hector Rory, have some cookies; and Johnnie Angusie dear, put some more sugar in

your tea. Take your fill of everything. Never mind loaf-bread. You can get lots of that at home. Eat plenty, children dear, for a wake like this only comes once in a great while."

"Is them all your children, Malcolm?" Captain Roderick asked, when the wake-bird contingent were about through supper.

"Yes, sir," he answered, but without looking up from his work, "all mine—three more at home. Smart, ain't they? You bet your life they are," he then declared, adding that they were, "Great eaters and great to pray!" which caused a general snicker. But this did not even ruffle, in the least, the wise old wake-hawk, who, summoning his dogs, fed them with scraps of cold mutton and ham and buttered bread that the little wake-birds were leaving on their plates. When he was fully satisfied that full justice had been done to the good things before him on the table, he betook himself to the kitchen; and after lighting his pipe and manœuvring his brood for a return march, he at once proceeded homeward, well satisfied with his pleasant outing.

After supper the women gathered around the kitchen stove to gossip and tell ghost-stories, Grist-mill Nancy, the village gossip, being the first to be called on for a yarn as she was regarded as the best talker in the gaggle. She told a story about a rooster crowing before midnight a few nights previous—a sure sign that some one was going to die! Little Peggie Young John heard something, too, but in her

case it was a hen instead of a rooster that was guilty of presaging death. The Widow Donald claimed to have seen a strange light going from the Squire's shop and back, a few nights before, and Miss Isabel Black Duncan spoke of hearing noise in the workshop—a forerunner of the making of the coffin. A week before, Miss Mary White John, who had the reputation of being gifted with second sight, met a funeral on its way from the wake-house to Little Village; and her sister Miss Jessie, also a good story-teller, saw a light in the cemetery; but the former capped the climax by telling about the woman without a head who had haunted Ghost Brook for years.

“Sh-h-h!” cried the Widow Donald. “Some one is coming.”

Just then Captain Roderick entered the kitchen after a drink, and there was silence among the women for a moment—a silence that was soon broken by Grist-mill Nancy.

“We are telling ghost-stories here,” she said. “Now, you tell us a good ghost-story.”

“Wal,” said the old smuggler, “I don't believe much in ghosts, but I'll tell you's a story about Old Nick.”

“Old Nick—and who's he?” asked the Widow Donald. “Nick Hector Sandy? I'm sure he wasn't so very old when he died.”

“No,” chuckled the old sea-dog, “not Nick Hector Sandy, but the old and well-know'd proprietor of the bottomless pits.”

"Well, you are the bad man whatever," said the shocked widow.

"Go on with your story, Captain," urged the village gossip, "and don't mind her."

The old smuggler then related how one dark September night, several years before this, just as he was going to bed, Angus the Razor's little boy from Pigdale came to the door. "'If you please, sir,' he says," Captain Roderick proceeded, "'mother wants you's to come back with me.' 'Why?' I says. 'Father hung himself in the barn,' he says. 'Wal,' I says to myself, 'I hope he made a good job of it.' You know he tried to cut his throat with a razor onct, hence his nickname. But to continue my story: I put the old horse in the sulky and in less than half an hour was at his house which was about six miles from Big Frog Pond. The first thing I heard was cryin.' It was a woman, of course; and when I went into the barn I saw Mrs. Angus the Razor down on her knees, bawlin' over what I was thinkin' was the remains of the late lamented Angus himself."

"The poor woman!" interrupted the Widow Donald.

"Wal—that is make no difference," said Captain Roderick, "for some women 'll cry whatever. 'I am thinkin' lovey is dead,' she says. 'Oh, poor dear Angie, speak to me!' she says, but they wasn't a boo out of 'lovey.' 'He should have taken *Rough on Rats*,' I says, and the cryin' stopped. 'Shut your mouth,' she says, 'for, indeed, he was a good man

whatuver.' 'Yes,' I says, 'with whiskey when he had it, which was often enough,' I says. 'And many's the beatin' I got when he was drunk,' she says. 'But can't you do something?' 'Wal—yes,' I says, grabbin' hold of the coward and shakin' him purty lively. 'Wake up, old boy,' I says, 'wake up or Old Nick 'll have you, for any one who commits suicide goes straight to the bottomless pits, providin', of course,' I says, 'that he was mentally responsible.' Wal—that got her dander up. 'Go home,' she says, and off I started. But she began to cry again, so, after considerable coaxin', I came back, although I was kind of riled. 'Get a bucket of water, then,' I says, and when she was out of the way I ketched 'love,' the miserable scoundrel, and I shook him to I could hear the sins rattlin' around in his soul. And when his wife came with the bucket of water, I gave him the whole business in the face. There was no more dozin' after that. But you should have heard her when the poor duvil came to. It was simply duvilish all she said to him. 'Look a' here,' I says at last, 'that's a nice boy you's got,' I says, 'and he have such good manners, too,' I says, and she cooled down at onct. 'Ah, but it's yourself that's nice,' she says. But I can't stand much of that kind of talk, so I made a bee-line for home.

"The night was very dark, and they was something white ahead of me that was settin' the old horse crazy. I laid on stick to see if I could ketch the movin' object, but it kept ten feet ahead of me. I'd stop the

horse, and the white thing 'd stop; I'd trot, and it'd trot. Wal—I was thinkin' it must have been Old Nick, for the hair on my head was standin' straight on end—a sure sign, they are sayin', that the Prince of Darkness wasn't very far away. Of course, I was nearly scared to death, but I was bound to catch the white thing before I got to the cross-roads a mile away, so I piled on stick. But the said white thing kept ahead of me all the way; and when I came to the cross roads, it shot along the road goin' down hill with a long, out-of-breath boo-oo-oo—"

"The duvil sure!" cried the excited Widow Donald.

"The duvil?" chuckled the old sea-dog. "No, but a little white two-year-old bull that hadn't sense enough to get out of the way, for they is no such things as ghosts whatuver."

CHAPTER XXVII.

LOCHABER NO MORE.

AT seven o'clock next morning, coffin, rough-box, and bier, were completed, the rough-box having been at once taken to the churchyard where it was carefully placed in the newly dug grave; about nine, crowds of people began to come from far and near—among them Malcolm the Piper with his bagpipes; and at ten, the lid was fastened on the coffin which was then carried out to the front of the house where it was placed on the bier; then—all knelt in silent prayer.

It was an impressive sight, for all that vast concourse had known Grandfather in life. There were old men there who had climbed on his knee as children, and had listened with childish delight to his tales of that dear old land beyond the sea. They had now come with their children, and their children's children, to follow his body to the grave.

Dong! the old church-bell mournfully rang out in the distance, and four stalwart men raised the bier to their shoulders and marched off slowly and sadly towards Little Village, to the wail of the Scottish bagpipe.

Arasaig Donald, acting as marshal, headed the procession, followed by about sixty men marching in double file—fine specimens of perfect manhood, too, for nearly every one of them stood over six feet in height. The coffin was borne on the shoulders of the last four, and immediately behind it came the piper wearing the plaid and Scottish bonnet. Then followed a vast throng of people—some in waggons, some on horseback, and still others on foot.

At a signal from Arasaig Donald, four men from the front relieved the bearers, who, stepping to one side, fell in at the rear of the bearer corps; and at intervals of about a minute, four more men would relieve those carrying the coffin, who in turn would fall in behind their predecessors at the rear. All marched slowly, keeping time to famous laments and funeral wails; and as the procession neared Little Village Malcolm the Piper struck up *Flowers of the Forest*, the last strains of which died away as the coffin was borne inside the old-fashioned little church.

Dong, dong, dong! then tolled the old bell sadly.

After a few minutes spent in silent prayer, the coffin was raised by reverent hands, turned around, and carried out of the church; and as it was being slowly lowered into the grave, the kind-hearted piper began that weird, soul-stirring piece of music—*Farewell to Lochaber*.

The bier was at once taken by a couple of men to the far end of the churchyard, where it was first torn asunder and then thrown over the churchyard fence,

for it was regarded as bad luck not to destroy a bier, the belief prevailing that if it were left intact some one of Grandfather's near relations might be the next to die.

After the grave was reverently closed in, that great concourse again knelt for a few moments in silent prayer. Once again the pipes wailed *Farewell to Lochaber*, and the numerous crowd began to melt slowly away. Not a few remained, however, to hear the last notes of that heart-rending farewell—of that old, old Scottish favourite. They echoed on hill, in wood, and were lost—lost forever!

The day was beautiful. The sun shone brightly, and a gentle, warm, southwest breeze ruffled the dark-blue waters of the much-loved Gulf. The birds sang sweetly in the woods near the churchyard, and the golden rays of the sun played on the rolling waves of the sea. It was fitting, too, that nature should rejoice, for a long, long journey was at an end—a journey of over ninety-three years from that old wooden cradle, where as a baby, the aged Scotsman was rocked to sleep by his Highland mother, to this humble grave in the distant country of his adoption, where his venerable corse was reverently laid to rest by his sorrowing friends. Farewell, then, farewell to Lochaber and the heather-clad hills of his boyhood days—farewell to the glorious land of his birth! Farewell, for his honest ashes rest in the land of the lovely Mayflower—far, far across the ocean—beyond where he used to see the sun sink to rest when but

a little boy! Yet once again farewell—farewell to strath and brae, to burn and glen, to thistle and heather. Farewell to home, to friends, to country! Farewell to Lochaber! Lochaber no more!

After the funeral, the box-cart party bade their friends adieu, and forthwith left Little Village for Long Beach Sands, it being Captain Roderick's intention to sell the cargo he had buried in the sand, and to repair the *Rob Roy*, which he expected to have afloat again, early in September.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE COLONEL CLAIMS HIS OWN.

TWELVE, fourteen, yes, sixteen days passed without Colonel Gordon having received an answer from Marion.

"Well, this is simply getting unbearable," he said to himself. "I must go East," and he at once made the necessary arrangements.

Meanwhile the number of Dr. Russell's visits to Fernwood, each week, was increasing. It began to look, too, as if Miss Thurlow would soon be Mrs. Edwin Russell—at least the gossips thought so, and said so, but in their calculation they did not consider the fact that Dr. Russell visited the Massachusetts General almost every day, and the existence of that beautiful young Nova Scotia girl who had been in charge of the operating-room when the doctor performed his famous operation.

"I must write the Colonel to-morrow asking him to wait," was a resolution Miss Thurlow made each day after she had received his letter. But the Colonel would not wait. He was bound to have an answer, favourable or otherwise, and so it happened.

Neither did Dr. Russell show a disposition to wait very much longer. He, too, acted as if he were a little anxious to have an answer, whether favourable or not, although it could hardly be said that it was with this object that he called at Fernwood, a few days later.

Marion, beautiful as a Grecian goddess in her simple dress of white, was sitting on the verandah with her mother, busy with some needle-work, when he arrived.

"Dr. Russell, Marion," Mrs. Thurlow whispered, and Marion blushed deeply.

After the usual courtesies were exchanged, Dr. Russell, with a gracious acknowledgement, took the chair offered him and sat beside Mrs. Thurlow. But as the evening had already grown a little chilly, they soon left the verandah for the drawing-room.

A few minutes later the door-bell rang, and Miss Thurlow went to the door.

"Hello, Marion!"

"Why, Colonel Gordon!" said Miss Thurlow, blushing a deep crimson. "Come right in," she added heartily. "And when did you arrive?"

"At five-thirty," answered the Colonel. "How's your mother?"

"Very well, indeed, thank you," said Marion, ushering him into the drawing-room where he was received, without enthusiasm, by Mrs. Thurlow who at once introduced him to his handsome rival.

Dr. Russell saw at a glance that he was out of the

race, and although he felt more or less uncomfortably jealous, he could not help admiring the splendid product of western civilization whose place in Marion's affections he had been trying to usurp.

"I am a fool!" he said to himself as he thought of the lovely nurse but for whose whispered advice on a certain memorable occasion he would still be comparatively unknown. "Yes, I am a fool!" he repeated; and as soon as he could conveniently take leave of his friends at Fernwood, he did so, hastening to the Massachusetts General to see a very sick patient of his who was in Miss Sutherland's ward, although nothing but a longing to see the nurse in charge of it, brought him to the hospital at that time in the evening.

A couple of hours before this, Miss Sutherland came on duty, and having first attended to the needs of her patients, and to her routine work, sat down for a few minutes to write her aged parents a brief note which was to accompany a five-dollar bill she was sending them out of her month's earnings—but not without many little personal sacrifices, for although she had passed her final examinations, she was still only a student nurse, and her income was very, very small. And as she carefully sealed the envelope addressed to her father, containing the money she could ill spare, her thoughts were far away: they had wandered to an humble Nova Scotian home, in the beautiful Annapolis Valley—to a little white-washed cottage, shaded with apple-trees which were loaded with

ripening fruit, where a white-haired, aged couple sat in silence by the kitchen fire thinking, perhaps, of their fair-haired Josephine in the great hospital of that distant busy city.

When Dr. Russell called, he found his patient comfortable.

"Well, Miss Sutherland," he began, as they together walked down the ward towards the door, "I am sorry, sincerely sorry that you are leaving us."

"It is very kind of you to say so, Dr. Russell."

"I am sincerely sorry," he repeated with emphasis, "for I owe you a great deal; and do you know what I have been thinking?"

"No," the poor girl answered. For how could she know?

"I am an outspoken sort of cuss," the doctor continued, but not without great embarrassment, "and, to tell you the truth, I think we were born for each other. I—I love you—and do not wish to let you go."

"Kindred in heart and soul,
Love silent on them stole."

And great tears came to the lovely blue eyes of the dutiful daughter and nurse.

"I feel—both honoured—and flattered," she faltered, "but," she added as she again thought of that humble little home far away, "I am now the only support of my aged parents and cannot—"

"But you must," pleaded her lover, "and all will be well, I hope, with you and them."

"I suppose—I must, then," she assented, although she hardly knew what she said.

But he knew what she meant, and was happy as he reluctantly left the ward with a promise to call again—early the next evening.

At Fernwood, Colonel Gordon was taking leave of Miss Thurlow.

"By the way, Marion," he asked, as she escorted him to the door, "did you receive my letter?"

"Yes," she answered, with eyes cast down, "and I hope you will pardon my rudeness in not answering it."

"I came a long way for your answer," he said, taking her hands in his, "and it is—"

"Yes."

"Then," he added tenderly, slipping a beautiful diamond ring on her finger, "I am repaid a hundred-fold for my long journey, and," he added, as he thought of the years since they first met, "for my long wait."

A few days later, after a pretty ceremony in the drawing-room at Fernwood, in the presence of a few friends, they began their journey in life as man and wife. Hastening westward, they arrived at Cheyenne on the morning of the thirtieth of August, to find that breezy western city in its gayest holiday attire—flags flying, crowds gathering, cowboys on horseback dashing hither and thither. For it was Frontier Day.

This was all new to Marion whose delight knew no bounds.

Early in the afternoon her devoted husband took her to the Fair Grounds, a mile north of the city, where hundreds of cowboys had congregated, either to witness or to take part in the events of that auspicious day. He showed her the great corrals containing the wild horses and cattle that were to take part in the various contests; and for the first time in her life she saw those wonderful cowboys roping wild steers, branding mavericks, and subduing bucking broncos.

"Oh, this is glorious, glorious!" she cried, with almost childish delight, as she watched, with breathless interest, a swarthy, sunbrowned young fellow spring, without touching a stirrup, into the saddle of the fierce outlaw of the plains, a powerful bronco that never before yielded to man. But no sooner had he done this than the great untamed shot fiercely into the air, coming down with its legs perfectly rigid. Then a fierce fight for supremacy began between a horse that was never conquered and a cowboy that never failed—a fight which lasted fully fifteen minutes, ending in victory for the plucky rider who came out of this terrible contest all covered with froth and dust, and with blood streaming from his ears and nostrils. But the great cheer that went up from the thousands of delighted spectators, as he rode in triumph past the grand stand with the great outlaw of the plains under complete control, must have more than compensated for the somewhat rough usage he was subjected to in the contest.

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Thus another happy day passed—it was Marion's first in the great unconventional Land of the West, where the very atmosphere of heaven seemed freer—less confined.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ALEX SQUIRE ANGUS.

TEN years quickly passed away.

When the Spanish-American war broke out, Colonel Gordon went to the Philippines in command of the famous Gordon Scouts, a body of cavalry five hundred strong, all cowboys from the plains—tough-nerved, reckless of danger, and accustomed to all kinds of hardship and exposure. With them he did splendid work at the front, having been more frequently mentioned in dispatches than any other colonel in the whole army. But one day, about eight months after his arrival, he was so severely wounded in a sharp engagement near the little village of Santa Estrella, that he was no longer able to command the famous Scouts. He was consequently ordered home. Then came the parting with his troop, which was as painful to him as it was to his faithful men, rough, weather-worn, reckless, though they were, some of them weeping like children when they came to say good-bye. For they all loved him, not so much for his bravery and devotion to duty as for that noble-hearted unselfishness which they were only too quick to notice in everything he did.

At San Francisco he was met by his devoted wife and three pretty little children who accompanied him back to Cheyenne where, although bent, lame, emaciated, and burnt beyond recognition by the hot tropical sun, he received perhaps the most enthusiastic welcome ever given a man in that part of the country.

"Let us go to our ranch in the Big Horn Basin," said the weary though grateful soldier to his brown-haired and dutiful Marion, after everything was over.

"Yes, my dear," she assented, "let us get away from all this excitement and bustle;" and the necessary arrangements were at once made for a journey to Gordonville where two very happy years were spent. Having meanwhile completely recovered his health, at the end of that time Colonel Gordon went to Missouri, where for a couple of years he successfully managed a large company which owned and operated several very valuable lead-silver mines in the Bullion State. But when the controlling stock of that company passed into new hands, no increase in salary could induce him to remain in charge of its operations. He resigned his position as general manager, and, after spending the tenth anniversary of his happy marriage at Fernwood, left for England where he remained four months, returning to America by way of Halifax, about the end of January, having been attracted north by the unprecedented prosperity which the Island of Cape Breton was then enjoying.

"I wonder if all the Cape Breton coal areas are being worked," he happened to remark in a conversa-

tion he had with the genial proprietor of the Bluenose, shortly after his arrival.

"Don't think so."

"Then, do you know where there are any good workable areas that are not being developed?"

"There is one very fine property, I am told, somewhere near the mouth of the pretty Hunting River, which is situated on the west side of the island."

"Is there any one in the city familiar with that locality?"

"The owner of the property lives in Halifax, but I do not know whether he is very familiar with the locality or not. However, there is a fine young chap attending the Maritime University of Medicine here, who worked as timekeeper there last summer, to earn money to help with his college course—and he may be able to give you all the information you desire."

"How could I see him?" asked the Colonel.

"I'll telephone out to the college, asking him to call at the hotel."

That was how Alex Squire Angus, now a handsome, powerful-looking young man, standing over six feet in height, happened to meet Colonel Gordon.

CHAPTER XXX.

AT THE ORPHEUS.

ALEX boarded on Pleasant Street, at Hawthorne Cottage, the home of an old couple who were living on their money. They usually took one medical student to board more for company than for any money they might make out of him, and always summered at Bedford whither they went almost every year after the Maritime University of Medicine closed. Having made an appointment with a classmate for seven-twenty, Alex was unable to accept Colonel Gordon's very cordial invitation to dine with him at the Blue-nose, at seven o'clock.

One of the topics of conversation at the tea table at Hawthorne Cottage that evening, was the concert at Orpheus Hall.

"Goin' to the Orpheus concert to-night, Doctor?" Mr. Morden asked.

"I did partly promise one of the students to go with him," Alex answered.

"Guess it's goin' to be good."

"You should go, Doctor," said Mrs. Morden, "if for nothing else than to hear Miss Stuart sing."

"Who is Miss Stuart?" Alex asked unconcernedly.

"Why, Doctor, she is Contractor Stuart's daughter, and the Stuarts are away up. She only returned on Thursday from Italy, where she was studying music. She's only nineteen—just the age for you! An only living child, too, and her father has lots of money! Heard her sing before she went away. Only sixteen then. But it was perhaps more her beauty that attracted my attention than her voice which was, indeed, grand, even then. Flora Stuart! Why, Doctor, there isn't a finer girl in the city. Besides, she goes to your church, and now that this is your last year at college, and that you are nearly through your medical course, the time is drawing near when you shall have to select a life partner. But she's the girl for you; and, upon my word, if I knew her, I'd invite her to the house so that you'd have an opportunity of meeting her. But mark my words, Doctor, she's one of the best catches in the city."

All this from a noted gossip and somewhat ambitious matchmaker, was lost on Alex who changed the topic of conversation from that of life partnership to that of pulling teeth, a subject upon which Mrs. Morden could talk long, and with more or less personal knowledge, although without any very special degree of enthusiasm.

When Fred Bludgeon called at seven-twenty, Alex was in his room.

"Goin'?" asked Fred.

"I think I shall," Alex answered. "But isn't it a little too early yet?"

"Perhaps it is," Fred agreed, taking the seat Alex had offered him.

"Anything new?" Alex asked.

"My old girl's home," Fred answered, taking from his pocket a copy of the evening's *News-Bulletin* from which he read the following extract:

"'Miss Stuart, the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Robert Stuart, the well-known contractor, who resides at Thistledown, South Park Street, was one of the passengers on the *Batavia* which arrived in port from Liverpool on Thursday last. It is understood that this young lady, who spent the last three years in Italy completing her musical studies, will sing at the Orpheus concert this evening.'

"What is she like, Fred?" Alex asked.

"She is tall," Fred explained, "and rather slight. But her figure is faultlessly perfect. Her eyes are blue, and her face—"

"Is as beautiful as the roses of the ruddy dawn of day," Alex added naively.

"Yes, as beautiful as the roses of the ruddy dawn of day," Fred repeated; "and her voice is soft, and rich, and sweet," he added with enthusiasm. "Oh, there is no other girl in the world so fair! But she does not love me," he was quick to complain.

"Miss Stuart, you mean?" Alex asked absently.

"Yes, Miss Stuart," answered Fred.

"Why should she?"

Alex meant no offence, but Fred Bludgeon, eldest son of the wealthy senior of Bludgeon & Scrutcher, felt quite hurt.

"But why shouldn't she love me, Alex?" he asked sharply.

"You cannot expect her to love you in a day. You must win her love by proving yourself worthy of her."

"Time will tell," said Fred thoughtfully.

"It always does, Fred."

"But you must meet her to-night," said Fred, who wished to make his classmate jealous, for that seemed to be his only reason for wishing to introduce Alex to the girl he loved almost to distraction.

"Listen!" said Alex. "Half-past seven."

The clock in the dining-room had just struck the half-hour, and a couple of minutes later the two medical students were slowly walking up Pleasant Street on their way to Orpheus Hall.

At Thistledown Mrs. Stuart and Flora were upstairs getting ready for the concert, while Robert Stuart waited below in the luxuriously furnished parlour of his splendid residence on South Park Street; and although no one saw him, he surely must have looked a little untamed as he sat with his two feet up on the table.

Born at Burnsville, Cape Breton, he left home against the wishes of his parents when but a lad of sixteen, and going south, he followed railroad-building as an occupation graduating from navvy to gangforeman, from gangforeman to walking-boss, and

from walking-boss to contractor. He then travelled extensively, undertaking large railway contracts in Mexico and in several of the Southern States, and was always noted for his gruff outspoken manner, his sterling integrity of character, his shrewdness, and his fondness for a glass of good Scotch whiskey. While in New Orleans he met Florence Laing, then a noted contralto soloist in the cathedral church of that city, and a descendant of one of the aristocratic old plantation-owners of the Southern States. He won her love and married her, but not getting his health in the South, came to live in Halifax where Flora, their only surviving child, was born.

"Well," Robert Stuart philosophised, getting a little uneasy that his wife and daughter were not coming, "dressin' for a concert seems to be one of the ways those women folk have for killin' time. But I don't exactly see what I'm goin' down to that there Orpheus mix-up to-night for, with my unclassical ears that find it hard enough to tell *Scots Wha Hae* from *Yankee Doodle*. But I s'pose a fellow 'll have to go."

Just then Flora came down to the parlour.

"Are you ready, father?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered, "this last half hour. Now, wrap yourself up warmly," he added, "for you must remember that Halifax isn't Italy."

"I shall be very careful, father," said Flora, "as I have such a bad cold. But I do not think there is any danger in my going out so long as I do not get overheated. I only wish I were able to sing this even-

ing to oblige dear old Professor Raleigh, for I partly promised him to take part in this concert before I left Italy. He was so very kind to me when I studied music under his instruction that I feel very sorry to disappoint him."

"Tut, tut, tut," returned her father. "Let old Raleigh go to—blazes. He knows the reason of your not consentin' to sing to-night. Your note to him this morning should be sufficient on that point. You can sing for him some other time. Let the old duffer wait. But what's keepin' your mother, Flora?" he then asked impatiently, and Flora went upstairs to see.

By this time Alex and Fred Bludgeon were comfortably seated in the Orpheus Hall, Alex occupying the seat nearest the aisle half way up the centre row.

Fred appeared to be very nervous, for he kept almost continually turning around towards the main entrance.

At length the Stuarts came.

"There she is, Alex!" Fred whispered, giving his friend a nudge. "There she is, Alex, there she is," he repeated as Flora came up the aisle behind her parents, "the loveliest girl in the world!"

An usher met the Stuarts, but it happened that their seats, which were in the third row, were occupied by persons who should have gone in the three seats immediately in front, so that the Stuarts had to wait until the mistake was rectified.

Meanwhile Flora happened to be standing in the

aisle immediately opposite to where the two students were sitting. Fred gently nudged Alex who looked up, his kindly, expressive, dark-brown eyes meeting the beautiful, large blue eyes of the lovely girl who stood beside him; but blushing deeply, he quickly looked away. Flora's lovely eyes flashed, and she drew a quick, short breath as if she had been startled. But it was nothing serious. She also blushed deeply, then turned pale, so that it must have been a great relief to her when the usher succeeded in vacating their seats.

"Who can that handsome fellow be with Fred?" she asked herself several times that evening.

Poor Flora! It was the same old story—a story almost coëval with the first heart-beat.

After the concert was over, Robert Stuart, leaving his wife and daughter standing in the aisle, went up to the stage to have a talk with Professor Raleigh; and Fred Bludgeon improved this golden opportunity by going up the aisle to where they were and asking Flora if he might present Alex.

"Who is he, Fred?" asked her mother.

"He is a classmate of mine—one of the cleverest students at the University," answered Fred. "He is from Little Village, Cape Breton, and a real good fellow."

"Bring him along, then," said Mrs Stuart, casting a look of admiration at her lovely daughter.

Fred did as he was told, and Alex made such a good

impression on Mrs. Stuart that she invited him to spend the next evening at Thistledown.

"Come with Fred," she added.

He did come. As the evening advanced, Miss Stuart was asked to sing; and she did sing—a beautiful love-song from one of the great Italian masters.

"Let us all sing," she then suggested. "Fred, you will sing tenor, mother will sing contralto, I shall sing soprano, and you," she added, turning to Alex, "sing bass, I know."

They did sing—those good old songs, old yet ever new.

Mr. Stuart listened with silent indifference.

"Give us *Auld Lang Syne*," he at length suggested.

And Flora at once began a pretty prelude to her father's favourite which they sang with such feeling.

"'For auld lang syne my dear—'"

they were now at the last chorus, and almost unconsciously Flora looked up at Alex who was standing at her left. She then blushed deeply—missed the time, forgot the chords of the accompaniment, took her hands off the keys, but did not stop singing—

"'For auld lang syne
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.'"

Flora again looked up at Alex. Their eyes met. In her beautiful, large, expressive blue eyes was that love-light which, unlike the lips, cannot lie—that

old, old tell-tale love-light that "must have been in Eve's eyes"—so the old smuggler once said— "the first glimps' she got of poor misfortunate Adam in the old and well-know'd Garden of Eden."

CHAPTER XXXI.

CAPTAIN RODERICK.

Time seemed to have made but little change in Captain Roderick who was quietly spending the winter at Big Frog Pond. His old friend Malcolm Allan Sandy was with him, having come from Long Beach Sands that very afternoon, to remain a couple of weeks, and after tea both drew their chairs up before the old-fashioned fire-place in the kitchen, to indulge in the luxury of a good smoke.

"Do you remember that stormy night you ran the *Rob Roy* ashore at Long Beach Sands?" asked the guest, after they had gotten their pipes lit.

"Will I uver forget it, Malcolm?" Captain Roderick answered.

"I wonder what became of the pretty little boy you had with you that night. Do you ever see him now? Ah, wasn't he an awful nice little fellow, Captain?"

"He was, indeed," the old smuggler agreed, tears coming into his eyes. "Brave, and kind, and nice! I nuver see'd him after we left Little Village that time. I called once or twice sence, but he was away to school."

"I suppose he's a big man by this time, and perhaps he's so proud that he wouldn't speak to us if he'd see us now."

"It's easy see'd you's dosen't know him, Malcolm. Poor little sonny 'd nuver get like that. He is too noble by nature to be a snob."

"Indeed, I believe you are right there."

And both sat in silence for a time, watching the brightly burning fire.

"Well, Captain," said his genial guest, after perhaps three or four minutes had elapsed, "you are holding your own pretty well. I don't think you changed very much in the last ten years."

"Only I got duvilish bald of late," said the old smuggler, taking off his sou'wester, and lo ! there was only a fringe of grizzly hair left.

"Political honours and baldness seem to go hand in hand in your case, Captain, the one lending a certain dignity to the other."

"The duvil !" laughed the old sea-dog ; "my hair has been comin' out these last fifteen years. At first there was only a spot about the size of a silver dollar, but it kept spreadin'. 'Get your hair cut, Rory,' says one. 'Why doesn't you's get your hair cut short?' says another. 'Wal—to please them, I did get my hair cut short, but the misbehavin' spot kept extendin' its boundries so I got careless after a while and let my hair grow long. But between us, Malcolm, the real reason was that I was getting ashamed of the bald spot, and was wantin' to cover it. Then I see'd

an advertisement for *Dr. Dandur's Wonderful Hair Tonic* which, they said, would make the hair grow on a bald pate in one night. It was a new and wonderful medicine, they claimed, which would also prevent hair from gettin' into the bad habit of leavin' the top of a man's head; and Dr. Dandur was hailed as a benefactor to baldheaded humanity. I bought twelve bottles at one dollar apiece. But after usin' four bottles I throw'd the rest outside, for the misbehavin' spot kept on growin' larger. My purse, too, had grown—twelve dollars smaller, which made it positively dangerous for any one to talk Hair Tonic to me for the next two months. But a sucker that 's ketched onct can be ketched a second time with the same old hook if you's'll only change the bait. So I bit again by investin' in a bottle of *Hair Vigour* with the result that the spot kept on growin'. Wal—I simply got stubborn after awhile, for I was bound to make my hair grow whatever. So I kept on suckerin'. Five dollars worth of *Hair Food*, a kind of highly perfumed salve, was my next investment, and the spot kept on growin' ! Then I tried kerosene oil, but without any satisfactory results. But, 'Why doesn't you's shave your head, Captain ?' says Donald the Rabbit; so to carry out my rôle of star sucker, I shaved my pate twice a week all winter, intendin' to let the spot sprout when the warm weather came, but then came the finale."

"The what, Captain ?" asked his guest.

"The finale," the old smuggler repeated. "It was

spring, Malcolm, and last spring at that. The birds was singin' at each other in the trees, the lambs was friskin' about in the fields, and the calves was bellerin' about the farm-yards of Big Frog Pond, when, lo and behold ! Cross-eyed Rory fell in love. 'Come with me, Captain, come with me,' he says to me one evening about dark, 'and ask for the old girl for me,' he says. 'Go 'head yourself,' I says. 'Wal,' he says, 'my chances of gettin' her'll be better with you.' 'The duvil the better,' I says. 'Wal—my dear old friend,' he pleaded, with tears in his eyes, 'I hope you's are not goin' back on me. Besides, it's the good old way,' he says, half cryin'. Wal—when I see'd the tears comin', I told him to get a bottle of Scotch, and soon we was at her father's house which, to say the least, was a very scraggy-lookin' sort of mansion. 'Is she cross, Rory ?' I says, rappin' at the door. 'Cross as the very duvil,' he says. 'Wal,' I says, 'I pity you.' 'Wal—I don't,' says the old girl herself, openin' the window above the door and throwin' a kettle of hot water at us. No doubt it was meant for her love-sick suitor, but it was his promotor that got the whole business on the head, so farewell to the grizzly hair that once covered the top of my pate—farewell, farewell, farewell ! But that wasn't the worst of it—my political opponents made all kinds of capital out of the incident when I ran for the municipal council last fall."

" But what came over you, Captain, when you went into municipal politics ? "

"I wanted to take some of the conceit out of Billie the Merchant," the old smuggler explained, "for he was doin' considerable blowin' about gettin' elected by acclamation when I got home about the middle of October. But it no sooner got around that I was to oppose him than the slanderin' and calumniatin' began. You'd almost think I had horns and cloven hoofs, for if uver a poor duvil got a bad pedigree, it was me. Billie was a temperance crank, and awful sharp at the tongue, and, if anything, his political henchmen was worse. They called me uverything, and finally wound up by makin' a song about me losin' the grizzly covering off the top of my pate. But I didn't say nothing, for I had my eye on the home stretch. I just kept on lookin' as pleasant as I could, and continued sendin' people to Billie's shop where the poor fool was tryin' to make a good fellow of himself by dishin' out, on long credit, all kinds of goods and fallals to what I considered extremely bad pays. At last the goods began givin' out and with them Billie's popularity, so that comin' on election day he was so completely winded that I won hands down.

"Two months after the election he made an assignment, so that I was then the biggest toad in the puddle—and an extremely active toad I proved, too. For, when the district appointments came up in council last January, I made nearly uvery one of Billie the Merchant's political choir hog and goose reeves, with the exception of the poet laureate and the ex-nabob himself; and, on general principles, I made them into a

board of health, so that in their official capacity they'd have to attend the funeral of uvery cow or horse or sheep that 'd die around Big Frog Pond; and as there are no salaries attached to these respective jobs, Malcolm, they may think that the duties they shall have to perform are *infra dig.* people with cultured voices, but I intend to see that they attend strictly to business."

"He who laughs last, Captain—"

"Laughs best," added the old sea-dog, "and I'm havin' my little giggle now."

CHAPTER XXXII.

A COAL PROPOSITION.

NEXT morning after meeting Alex, Colonel Gordon interviewed Mr. James Archibald at his office on Hollis Street.

"I hear you own a coal proposition at Hunting River that isn't developed," was the way the Colonel broached the subject.

"Yes," Mr. Archibald assented, "I do."

"Well, I'd like to know something about it. Have you a plan of the areas?"

"Yes," Mr. Archibald answered, taking from his desk a surveyor's plan. "Look at that," he said, passing the plan to the Colonel, "and you'll have an idea of the location of the property. In the first place," he went on to explain, "the coal areas are nearly all submarine, and are situated on the west coast of the Island of Cape Breton, two miles north from the mouth of Hunting River. There are several seams in all, the three largest being fifteen, eight, and seven feet, respectively, in thickness; and they one and all crop out along the bluffs at the shore, in two places, about four thousand feet apart. Altogether, I own twelve square miles of areas contain-

ing more high-grade bituminous coal than any combination of money, men, and modern machinery, could mine in a couple of centuries. There are hundreds of millions of tons of it. It isn't a question of coal at all; it is only a question of development and transportation which resolves itself at once into the problem of raising the money necessary to develop the areas and to build a line of railway, about four miles in length, from the mine to a shipping-pier we contemplate building at the northeast side of Hunting River, an almost completely landlocked tidal water with a narrow entrance, about five miles in length, into which three or four small, picturesque, brook-fed branches flow. I have said the entrance to Hunting River is narrow, but there are fourteen feet of water which deepens to sixty feet in the large basin within, as you will see by the soundings on this plan," he added, handing the Colonel a blue print of an excellent tracing of Hunting River and the surrounding country, made by the Government Engineer for the Department of Public Works at Ottawa.

"Could you lend me these plans for a day or two so that I may have an opportunity not only of looking over them at my leisure, but of having copies made?"

"Why, certainly," Mr. Archibald agreed.

"Thank you very much. I shall take good care of them. But to return to our subject: What has been done to develop this coal proposition of yours?"

"We have our main slope down about one hundred and twenty feet."

"At what angle are you sinking it?"

"At forty-five degrees now, but as we go down I am convinced that the seams will gradually flatten out."

"What is your reason for saying that?"

"Well, the peculiar formation of the bluffs, the general lay of the land, which is very hilly, and the abundance of plaster in the immediate vicinity, convince me that there was an upheaval, and that these seams were thrown up. But when we get down under the sea where the formation is regular, the angle will not be so steep—probably not more than ten or fifteen degrees."

"How about your title to this property?"

"Its legality is beyond question, being direct from the Crown."

"What'll you sell for?"

"Let me see—two hundred thousand dollars: half cash, the balance in two annual instalments of fifty thousand dollars each, with interest at six per cent., secured by first mortgage."

"Well, I shall first have to go over the ground and examine the proposition; then, I shall have to see some of my Boston, Pittsburg, and Detroit friends; and then, if we decide to go into the thing, you shall hear from me."

"How long will this take?"

"About three weeks at the outside," answered the Colonel. "Do you want a cash deposit?"

"For three weeks, I don't. I'll hold it for you for

that length of time without any cash deposit. But perhaps you'd like to have a written option."

"No," answered the Colonel. "Your word is sufficient." For Colonel Gordon understood men.

"Well, you have my word of honour, Colonel, that if you purchase within three weeks, on the terms mentioned, the property is yours."

"Thank you. That's perfectly satisfactory to me."

"As for the plans," Mr. Archibald added, "you may keep them in the meantime. If the deal doesn't go through, you will kindly return them; if it does, they are yours."

"Thank you very much."

Next evening both men arrived at Clifton, a beautiful little town nestling on the north bank of Hunting River, four and a half miles from its mouth; and early the following morning they drove out to the Hunting River Coal Mines, a distance of six miles.

One day was sufficient to convince Colonel Gordon of the accuracy of Mr. Archibald's representations, and the next morning he left for Boston, Pittsburg, and Detroit.

On his return to Halifax, Mr. Archibald was asked by an intimate personal friend if he made a sale.

"Don't know," he answered, more or less discouraged. "Had a very able American engineer look over the property—gave him my terms which seemed satisfactory, but don't expect he'll be able to make things go."

His surprise must have been great, therefore, when,

inside the specified three weeks, he received from Detroit, the following telegram:

"Your terms sale Hunting River Coal areas satisfactory. Will immediately make the necessary arrangements for transfer. Kindly wire confirmation.

"W. CLIFFORD GORDON."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

WHOA!

FRED BLUDGEON was a frequent visitor at Thistle-down. But over three weeks had passed since Alex had been there—in fact, it almost looked as if his first visit were to be his last.

At four o'clock one afternoon near the end of February, however, something happened which made it necessary for him to call. He was walking along South Park Street at the time, with his head down thinking, when he heard some one, in tones of utter distress, calling:

“Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa!”

The voice sounded familiar—he looked up, and, to his surprise, saw a runaway horse coming down Morris Street at a furious rate of speed.

The man in the carriage was standing up, but could not stop the mad animal.

At the same time, too, an electric car was dashing up South Park Street which crosses Morris Street at right angles. But the man in the carriage and the motorman on the car could not see each other. And when the unfortunate man in the carriage came near enough to the crossing to see the danger he was in, he

seemed to lose completely his presence of mind, for he suddenly dropped the reins, threw himself on the seat, and in utter despair called for help.

"Help, help, help!" he cried. "For God's sake, help!"

Alex was now at the Morris Street crossing, and, realizing the man's danger but not his own, coolly stepped off the sidewalk into the street. The horse shied on seeing the car, then turned sharply to the left, upsetting the carriage and throwing the hapless occupant on his face on the car-track. The motorman instantly put on the brakes, but it was too late. There was not space enough to bring the car to a full stop. A moment later and the unfortunate man on the track would have been crushed to death were it not for Alex, who, springing lightly over the carriage, grabbed him by the feet and pulled him out of danger. A policeman, who was on the car, took charge of the horse, while Alex, with the assistance of the conductor and motorman, helped the dazed man to his feet only to find that the victim of what almost proved a fatal accident was Robert Stuart who had been out training a young horse, and who was not only badly shaken up but had the radial artery of his wrist cut by his heavy fall on the bare, frozen ground, the blood from the jagged wound spurting all over his clothes and into his face.

"Take me home, please," he muttered.

But before doing so, Alex tied a knotted handkerchief tightly around the injured wrist, a little above

the wound, thus stopping the flow of blood. Both then walked slowly towards Thistledown which was not very far distant, Mr. Stuart leaning heavily on Alex for support.

Mrs. Stuart saw them coming and met them at the door. She appeared to be very much excited, and when she saw her husband's hands, face, and clothes, all covered with blood, she fainted.

"Flora, Flora, Flora," her father called; and in an instant, with face all aglow, Flora came from the kitchen where she had been helping one of the maids.

"What's the matter, father?" she cried.

"Your mother fainted," he said wearily. "Take her upstairs to her room."

Mrs. Stuart had now regained consciousness, and Flora, not noticing the condition of her father who was taking off his overcoat with his back turned to her, took her mother to the room designated; and Alex, after helping Mr. Stuart to a luxurious leather sofa in the smoking-room, telephoned for the family physician, Dr. Kent-Richards, one of the leading practitioners in the city.

Fifteen minutes later a carriage stopped at the house, and the front door was opened by a lovable old gentleman between seventy and seventy-five years of age, who came into the hall without either knocking or ringing the door-bell.

"Who's sick here?" he called out.

"Come in here and see for yourself," Mr. Stuart answered.

"It's you, is it?" said the very unconventional although famous Dr. Kent-Richards, taking off his gloves, coat, and cap. "What's wrong, poor old Bob?" he asked sympathetically, on entering the smoking-room. "You're not looking yourself at all."

Mr. Stuart, after introducing Alex, told all about the accident.

"Too bad, too bad, poor chap," said the kind old doctor. "But this won't do us," he added, turning to Alex. "We must get to work."

Nor did it take him long, with Alex's assistance, to tie up both ends of the artery and dress the ugly wound on his patient's wrist.

"You're certainly a brick, poor old Bob," he said as soon as he was through. "You stood the pain like a hero. I know it was intense, but you've got lots of good material in your make-up. I'll call again tomorrow morning. Good-bye!" And he forthwith left the room almost as unceremoniously as he had entered it.

Flora went with him to the door.

"How's father?" she asked, with large tears in her eyes.

"Better, my dear, very much better," said the venerable old doctor. "He'll be all right again in a very short time."

When he was gone, she ventured into the smoking-room where she saw for herself her father's condition, and learned, too, the details of the accident.

"So it's you we have to thank for saving father's

life," said Flora, turning with a look of admiration to Alex, who, blushing deeply, felt so embarrassed that he hardly knew what to answer, when the old clock on the mantelpiece came to his rescue by striking six.

"It is about time for me to be going," he said, rising from his seat.

"But you must take tea with us," said Flora, standing in the doorway in front of him. "You have been so very kind I—we cannot let you go without your tea."

"Oh, thank you," Alex faltered. "But—"

"You'll have to stay," said Mr. Stuart. "You mustn't go. Sit down, old chap, sit down."

As neither Mr. nor Mrs. Stuart were able to go to the dining-room, Alex had tea alone with Flora who gave him her place at the side of the table, she herself taking her mother's, at the end. Her travels furnished an interesting topic for conversation, and, finding Alex an attentive listener, she told him all about her happy sojourn of three years in the land of sunshine, and music, and song.

After tea she left him in the dining-room, while she went to see how her father and mother were getting along.

"Resting nicely," she said on her return. "Both sound asleep."

In a very exaggerated form, the news of what almost proved a fatal accident, spread throughout the city with almost incredible rapidity, for Robert Stuart

was a prominent citizen. The evening papers had come out before the accident occurred, so that the only way of propagating the news was through the city gossips. Some of them had it that Robert Stuart was killed; others, that Robert Stuart's horse was killed; and still others, that a young medical student was killed in attempting to save Robert Stuart's life. The three versions of the story duly reached Fred Bludgeon who did not seem to care very much which version should prove to be the true one; and although he had been at Thistledown the evening before, he welcomed the intelligence, because it gave him a good excuse for calling, two evenings in succession, to see Miss Stuart with whom he was madly in love. Accordingly, as soon as he had tea, he donned his coat and hat, stuck a cigarette into his mouth, and slowly sauntered along Spring Garden Road and down South Park Street.

When he got opposite Thistledown, he noticed a light in the drawing-room.

"Hello!" he said to himself, "old Stuart must be dead sure enough."

Before going up to the front door, he peeped in on one of the drawing-room windows, only to find Alex, to his great surprise, sitting in a luxurious chair with a pile of photographs in one hand, while Flora, lovelier than ever, stood beside him, telling him whose they were.

"Ah!" he hissed, "she loves him," and he turned away.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE SAGE OF BIG FROG POND.

FOR Alex February and March were busy although uneventful months. But a great surprise was in store for him one fine afternoon, about the first of April, as he was returning from Dartmouth. Between the ferry-wharf and the post-office he met an old friend from Cape Breton—a short thick-set man, too, with a long grizzly beard and a kindly weather-beaten face.

“Captain Roderick!” he cried with delight, eagerly grasping the old smuggler’s hand.

“Wal,” said the old sea-dog, “you’s certainly have the advantage of me. Your face looks familiar, but I can’t just place it.”

“Do you remember Alex Squire Angus from Little Village?”

“Indeed, and I do,” said the old smuggler, his eyes filling with tears. “I thought I know’d the handsome face, but I didn’t know just exactly how it got up there.”

Alex laughed, but he could not keep the tears back, for it was years since he had seen Captain Roderick, and this unexpected meeting brought back vividly happy memories of bygone days—days spent in that humble little country village overlooking the dark-blue waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

"How have you been this long, long time, my dear old friend?" he asked, with a ring of genuineness and sincerity that touched the old smuggler's heart.

"Not too bad," Captain Roderick answered. "I got the *Rob Roy* off Long Beach Sands that fall, and me, and Foxy Donald, and Hurricane Bob, have been pokin' 'round in her uver sence. She ain't quite as fast as she was before she was blowed ashore, although she goes tolerable yet. But what are you's doin' here? Clerkin' in a store?"

"I am attending the Maritime University of Medicine, Capt'n," Alex answered, "and I expect to be a full-fledged doctor in a couple of months."

"A full-fledged doctor," repeated the old smuggler. "Wal—I wish you the best of luck. It was only last winter that Malcolm Allan Sandy was at Big Frog Pond, and we was talkin' about you's. He was sayin' that p'r'aps you was after gettin' so proud that you's wouldn't speak to us now if you see'd us. But I was tellin' him he didn't know poor old sonny. 'He's too nobl' by nature to be a snob,' I says, and I was right. Wal, wal, wal, sonny! I can hardly think on you's beir a doctor. You was a pretty boy when I see'd you last, and now vou's are a handsome man—the

pictur' of your mother and the pictur' of your grandfather. Wal, wal, wal, sonny! College didn't make you's proud whatuver. You's are the same old Alex—only bigger, and stronger, and finer-lookin'. Turn around to I's 'll get a good look at you's. There."

"You remember me now all right, Captain?"

"I'd know you now whatuver," said the old smuggler. "I'd know you's anywhere, for there's nobody in the world like you. But," he went on, "they are sayin' that college is a quare place—where you's learn lots of uverything from playin' foot-ball to yellin' when you's are sober. Down in Big Frog Pond, sonny, we was all teach'd how to yell when we was drunk, for yellin' is as natural to a man when he's drunk as cryin' is to a woman when she's got her back up. But we was always mum when we was sober. Not so in sensible old Halifax, it appears, for one day on Barrington Street I thought a hole was after comin' on the bottomless pits. 'What's that?' I says to the nearest policeman. 'That's nothing,' he says. 'Are you's deaf?' I says. 'Oh, that noise, is it?' he says. 'Wal—yes,' I says, 'that noise!' 'Wal,' he says, 'that's only a group of students givin' their college yell.' 'Is they all sober?' I says. 'Yes,' he says. 'Wal,' I says, 'is they all wise?' 'Oh, yes,' he says, 'they is all perfectly wise. Move on, mister,' he says, and so I moved on to I met the group. 'What's wrong with you's?' I says. 'Has you's got a pain?' I says. Wal—they opened out—and they yelled to they made me sick to my stomach, for it wasn't man

talk, or woman talk, or even monkey talk, or—save your presence—horse talk, but a kind of thing like :

‘ Rah, rah, rah ! Siss, boom, bah ! Rah, rah, rah !

Boom, boom, boom ! Zoom, zoom, zoom ! Doom, doom, doom !

Rah, rah, rah ! Siss, boom, bah ! Rah, rah, rah !’

But what knock’d the look clean off my face was when they got through, they walked off as serious as if they was only prayin’ for rain.

“ Now, sonny, it seems to me they are teachin’ too many things in college now-a-days,” continued the Sage of Big Frog Pond. “ Puttin’ too much in a man’s head is like puttin’ too much in a man’s stomach. He won’t digest half of it, and it impairs the receptacle. For if you’s want to get a scraggy specimen of a man, feed him on your jam and jelly, your muffins and dabs, your fritters and pop-overs, your waffles and griddle-cakes, your shrimp and terrapin, your spinach and asparagus, your celery and Jerusalem artichokes, your ice-creams and sherbets, your angel cake and noodles. And if you’s want an empty head filled with nonsense, feed it from the education pot of to-day ; and if the owner is at all inclined to eat, you’s’ll get a dandy.

“ The day Billie the Gentleman’s son came home to Big Frog Pond after gettin’ through college, he was goin’ up the road with a couple of Big Frog Ponders, tellin’ college yarns, to they came across a toad. ‘ Oh, boys,’ he says, ‘ look at the jump-apotimus—and the holler-ibus,’ he cries in ecstasy, pointin’ to an old pig

that was doin' a little gruntin' by the side of the road. Wal—poor old Billy was so proud of him that he sent his daughter Mamie to college, too. And when she got through, she could tell you's the number of decimeters in a snail's track, and she could talk by the hour on the genealogy of tadpoles and pilly-winks, but she couldn't darn the holes in her socks or sew a button on her clothes, much less get a meal of victuals. She was good-lookin', though, and politer than a hen backin' out of a hen-coop. But pity help the man she gets, I say, unless his feet was made for paradin' the broad road to poverty. A girl with calisthenics in her back may make a more graceful bow than a girl used to handlin' pots, but give me the girl that knows how to manipulate the kitchen stove uvery time. They is too much froth and too many bubbles in the education of to-day—too much sherbet and angel cake, and not enough oat-meal porridge. For the object of education is to develop, not to stuff; and the exercise must be moderate and wholesome. Ah, but it was yourself that got the good bringin'-up, sonny! My idea is to give a boy enough good plain grub three times a day—lots of porridge, oat-meal bread, milk, eggs, meat, cetera; readin', writin', and cipherin', for schoolin'; and whippin's and prayin', for exercise. Wal—but you're the handsome boy—whatuver," he added, looking into Alex's face. "The Halifax girls must be all struck on you's. No? Wal—that's quare. Howuver, college business seems to agree with you's fine—you's are lookin' so well. I suppose, too, that

sawin' bones to the hospital and jiggin' out teeth to the dispensary is very healthy exercise."

"But wouldn't you like to see through the college, Captain?" said Alex.

"I would, indeed!"

And going up to Hollis Street, they took the next car for the Maritime University of Medicine.

"You're in pretty good cheer comin' back, Captain," said Hurricane Bob to the old sea-dog on his return to the schooner, a couple of hours later.

"Wal," said the old smuggler, "they is no wonder, for I see'd one of the whitest and handsomest boys in the whole world."

"Who's that?" asked Foxy Donald.

"Alex Squire Angus from Little Village," Captain Roderick answered, "and he know'd me as soon as he see'd me, but it took me a long spell to place him. I thought I know'd the handsome face, although I sort of couldn't understand how it got up so high. But he's the same old sonny, and not one bit proud, although he's near through for doctor."

"For doctor?" queried Hurricane Bob.

"For doctor," the old sea-dog assured him; "and he took me through the college—and a fine place it is whatuver. But it seems to me there must be a kink in uverything, and that college has one sad wabble—a room where they is cuttin' dead men to pieces to find out what they is made of. I wonder they uver allowed such a thing in sensible old Halifax. But it appears

they do, for they was half a dozen corpses on as many tables, and three or four fellows at each table cuttin' away—takin' off little chips at a time. Some of them had little spy-glasses, and they was puttin' pieces of the material of the late lamenteds under the spy-glasses and passin' them around. 'Wal,' says one fellow to me, 'that's a good specimen of adipose tissue.' He thought I was his chum, but his chum was lookin' out the window at some girls that was passin' on the opposite side of the street. 'Is it?' I says. 'Where did *you* come from?' he says, sassy enough. 'I'm a *na-tive*,' I says; 'and where did you's get those late lamenteds?' I says. 'I think it was from Cape Breton,' he says, 'for we gets all our best stiffes from Cape Breton.' 'How?' I says. 'By raidin' graveyards after the best specimens die.' 'The duvil you's do,' I says. 'Yes,' he says, 'and we'll have you, too, if you's are planted on Cape Breton soil.' Wal—irreverence to the dead is bad enough, but when that young brat got extendin' it to the guest of a fellow-student, it was *infra dig.* the guest to stay a minute longer, so I made a bee-line for the door. 'Sonny,' I says, when I got out, 'that room ain't fit.' 'Wal,' he says, 'I niver cared very much for it myself.' 'Indeed, and I doesn't blame you,' I says. But when I reach Cape Breton, I must see Honourable Jo, and get him to put a stop to corpse-cuttin'. As for those that's doin' the cuttin', I'd like to see some of those skeletons comin' to life some night or other and chasin' them out of the

building. But this won't do us. We must get away before nightfall."

"Got your clearance?" asked Yankee Bob.

"Yes," the old sea-dog answered, "so let's get ready and go."

CHAPTER XXXV.

KING COAL.

FEBRUARY, March, and April, were busy months for Colonel Gordon who purchased the Hunting River coal areas outright from James Archibald for the sum of two hundred thousand dollars, and organized the Hunting River Railway and Coal Company, Limited, with Harry W. Bowan, of Boston, Robert L. Hadley, of Pittsburg, George F. Lawrence, of Detroit, and W. Clifford Gordon, with such other persons as they might associate with themselves by memorandum in writing, as provisional directors. On the third day of April, a bill passed the Nova Scotia Legislature creating and constituting these men, and such others as they might thus associate with, a body corporate which had for its principal objects the development of the Hunting River coal areas and the construction of a line of railway from Hunting River Coal Mines to a shipping-pier on the north side of Hunting River, thence via the pretty town of Clifton to another shipping-pier on Moose Cove, a splendid winter port on the south part of the Island of Cape Breton. Two weeks later, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council

granted a cash subsidy of three thousand two hundred dollars per mile to the new company for its projected line of railway; a week afterwards, the municipalities of St. Lawrence and Glenandale passed resolutions giving a free right of way and authorizing the payment of a cash bonus of one thousand dollars a mile on the fulfilment of certain easy conditions; and when the supplementary estimates of the federal parliament at Ottawa were brought down, about the end of April, there was another cash subsidy of three thousand two hundred dollars per mile available. It was under such favorable auspices, then,—with a free right of way; with land and buildings for railway purposes, track, rolling stock, and equipment, forever free from taxation; and with cash subsidies to the extent of about three hundred thousand dollars,—that the Hunting River Railway and Coal Company began its career with Colonel W. Clifford Gordon as its President and General Manager.

Reginald R. Todd—Reginald Reiver Todd, C. E., M. E., of Boston—was sitting in the office of the Alva Lorraine when he received Colonel Gordon's telegram asking if he would accept the position of Chief Engineer of the Hunting River Railway and Coal Company. He fully understood what would be required of him, for he enjoyed the confidence of Harry W. Bowan, one of the directors of the company, on whose recommendation Colonel Gordon made him the offer.

"Let me see," he said to himself, after adjusting his glasses and reading the Colonel's telegram over a

second time. "One-half a minute, Reggie. Two offers the same day, eh? One as Chief Engineer of the Georgia Central Extension at so much, another at so much as Chief of the Hunting River proposition. Down in Georgia among the niggers or up in Cape Breton among the savages—which? Among the savages," was his quick decision. "It's cooler up there anyhow."

"Yes," his reply to Colonel Gordon's telegram read. "Will meet you, Halifax, evening May first, Bluenose Hotel."

And Reginald Reiver Todd, a mining engineer and a civil engineer, and a middle-aged bachelor, too, of medium height—handsome, witty, impulsive, kind-hearted, and active as a cat—at once made the necessary arrangements to keep his appointment.

Colonel Gordon's instructions were very brief.

"Our Canadian neighbours have been very generous in granting assistance to the railway end of our project, Mr. Todd," he said. "But there are certain conditions as to construction which must be fulfilled in order that we get our subsidies from the federal government at Ottawa and from the local government here in Halifax, the municipal requirements being coincident with those of the local government. The Provincial Engineer, therefore, is the man we shall have most to do with, and I think if we can satisfy him as to location, grades, curves, roadbed, bridges, culverts, crossings, plans, profiles, books of reference, ballast, materials, etc., we shall have little or no diffi-

culty with the federal authorities at Ottawa, and none at all with the municipal authorities."

"I suppose, then, they have detailed rules governing surveys and construction."

"Yes. Here are copies of the requirements of the respective governments in the case of the St. Dennis and Richfield Railway, just completed, which will serve as a guide; and here is a blue print which not only gives the soundings of Hunting River but also the general topography of the surrounding country. Take them with you. What we want is a line of least total cost, all things considered. You know what I mean?"

Mr. Todd nodded assent.

"Well," the Colonel continued, "we purpose building, completing, and equipping the line in two sections: first, from the mines to a shipping-pier on Hunting River near Beaton's Landing; and secondly, from Beaton's Landing, via Clifton, to another pier, for winter shipments, at Moose Cove. Make an exhaustive survey, then, of the first section, carefully noting every local condition. You may meet with a little difficulty in Rankin's Gulch, a heavily wooded gorge several thousand feet in length. The divide, or summit, of this gorge, too, may offer a knotty engineering problem, but I think it can be satisfactorily solved. Get all the men you need, and make the best arrangements you can regarding salaries. Take every available local man. Our Canadian neighbours are using us well and they have a right to expect that we shall do

everything that is reasonable to reciprocate. You will need an assistant engineer, a draughtsman, rodmen, chainmen, axemen, etc., at once; and, if possible, get good local men who are familiar with local conditions, the prices of lumber, supplies, etc. Locate the shipping-pier thus at Beaton's Landing," he added, indicating on the blue print, with a stroke of his pencil, the location he favoured. "Check those Hunting River soundings by actual measurement, and, inside of three weeks or so, if the weather is at all favourable and everything goes well, I shall expect you to have all the information we shall need to make a judicious location of the first section. Your duties begin and end with the railway, however; Mr. Bancroft is in charge of the mining development and is directly responsible to me."

"That's satisfactory," said Mr. Todd, "but what arrangements have you made for the payment of salaries as well as for the payment of the general expenses of the engineering party?"

"Here's an advance of five thousand dollars for that purpose," was the Colonel's answer, taking a roll of bank notes from his pocket. "Place the amount in the Clifton Branch of the Federal Bank of Canada, and open a Chief Engineer's account. . . . But before I forget," he added, after Mr. Todd had counted the money and found the amount as stated, "I must show you a plan of one of the Pacific Coal Company's shipping-piers, which has a capacity of five thousand tons, and which, I am convinced, is

about what we require. The specifications are attached. Now, I want you to give me a detailed estimate of the cost of building a similar structure at Beaton's Landing with certain changes which I have indicated."

"All right, Colonel."

"I guess that is all now, so good-bye. I am leaving for Boston, New York, and Pittsburg, to-morrow afternoon, to make some financial arrangements, and shall return inside of three weeks via Detroit and Ottawa."

"But how about hotel accommodation at Clifton, Colonel. Where do you put up?"

"At McGregor's, of course. Mr. McGregor will use you all right."

"Good-bye, then."

"Good-bye."

Next morning at seven o'clock, Mr. Todd took the train for Cape Breton.

When Colonel Gordon returned to Clifton, three weeks later, Mr. Todd and his engineering party had all the information necessary to make a judicious location of that section of the railway from Hunting River Coal Mines to Beaton's Landing, and a judicious location was made. Plans, profiles, and books of reference, were then prepared, and the land required for right of way, stations, and terminals, was expropriated. Two local men were given the contract of cutting the right of way, and sealed tenders for the construction of the

whole section were asked by advertisement in one or two leading Canadian newspapers.

There were several tenders, the lowest and most satisfactory being that of one Joseph Lariviere, a prominent French Canadian contractor from St. Henri, Quebec. Mr. Lariviere was accordingly sent for, and on the twenty-ninth of June a contract was entered into between him and the Hunting River Railway and Coal Company for the construction of the whole section from Hunting River Coal Mines to Beaton's Landing, via Rankin's Gorge, a distance of about four and a half miles.

. This done, Colonel Gordon left for Halifax.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

GUILTY.

GUILTY, guilty, guilty! Guilty, said the jury foreman speaking for the jury; guilty, the city newspapers; guilty, the city gossips, big and little; guilty, the general public—guilty, guilty, guilty!

This was what the *Halifax Evening Tribune* had to say, editorially, in its issue of June 30th:

“The summer sittings of the Supreme Court for the trial of criminal cases began yesterday morning, Hon. Mr. Justice MacFarlane presiding. The first case aroused wide-spread interest, being that of the jealous young doctor who only a short time ago passed such eminently successful examinations at the Maritime University of Medicine, but who, by one single sad mistake in the very morning of life, ruined what promised to be a brilliant and useful career. For it now seems absolutely clear that it was he who attempted to murder his rival classmate, the very day before the final examination in Surgery, by sending him a box of chocolates through the mail, after having loaded them with that most deadly of poisons, potassium cyanide. The only thing, then, that stands between him and a murderer’s grave in the jail-yard

yonder, is the wonderful constitution possessed by his unfortunate classmate. . . . It was strange such a clever young man did not think of disguising his handwriting, and stranger still, that he should have left the bottle of potassium-cyanide tablets in his room. Why, if the evidence were not so absolutely clear, one would be almost inclined to think there was a miscarriage of justice. But he was defended with consummate skill. . . . Mr. Stoddard's cross-examination of the hand-writing expert was terribly severe. But nothing resulted therefrom which either helped the unfortunate prisoner or reflected the slightest credit on his fiery and eloquent counsel. For the jury, in view of such overwhelming evidence of guilt, could only come to one conclusion—a conclusion that was very quickly arrived at this afternoon. . . .”

Could this be Alex—Alex Squire Angus? And was it possible that he should have fallen so low?

There was at least one person in Halifax who still refused to believe in his guilt, and that person was Flora Stuart. But her father had left his youthful benefactor to any fate that might overtake him—having evidently forgotten all his protestations of friendship—forgotten that Alex had saved his life. It was not so, however, with his beautiful daughter, who was present all during the trial, hoping for the best, and suffering, too. But she had hoped against hope—for it only took the jury about ten minutes to find Alex guilty of an attempt to commit murder—she had suffered in vain.

She still refused to believe in his guilt, and immediately after the trial was over, sought admittance to the jail by ringing the harsh-sounding bell at the gate.

"What do you want?" growled the old turnkey from behind a board fence fifteen feet high.

"To see the young doctor, if you please," Flora answered.

"Have you a written permit from the sheriff?"

"No, sir, I have not."

"A lady, is it?" the dignified old turnkey then queried, for although he was somewhat rough in manner, he was all right at heart.

"Yes," she answered.

"Very well," he said, and without further ceremony he admitted her to the jail.

"Doctor," she called, rapping at the door of Cell No. 5.

"Who is there?" Alex asked, coming to the bars.

"Flora Stuart," she answered.

There was a heart-breaking pause.

Poor Flora! She had braved the talk of gossips, risked the displeasure of her father, and now perhaps Alex did not care to see her.

But he did.

"How good of you to come, Miss Stuart!" he said at length, with that strong mastery of his feelings which was characteristic of him. "Only one in my position can appreciate a kindness such as this."

"Is there anything I can do to help you—anything I can send you?" she faltered.

"Nothing, thank you, nothing," he answered, almost choking with the sobs that rose in his grateful breast, "unless you should care to come to see me occasionally."

"Then, I shall come to see you every day."

"Oh, forgive me, Miss Stuart, forgive me for asking you to come to see me at all," Alex faltered. "I had forgotten. You must not come," he added firmly. "You would only injure your good name by coming, and it would be unmanly for me to acquiesce in such an idea. You know what twelve men—sworn and true—have just done; and now, if I must go down, I shall go down alone. I am at least man enough not to allow any one to be injured on my account."

Flora now loved Alex as she had not loved him before, for, did he not stand out, grand and majestic, amid the gloom that surrounded him?

"I shall come to see you every day," she ventured.

"No, no, no," Alex protested. "You must not. But don't think I'm ungrateful. . . . Farewell!"

"Farewell!"

"Poor Flora!" he sighed, after she had passed beyond the prison-gate and was gone. "What a beautiful, pure-hearted little girl she is! But why did she come? Ah, I know now—it is because she thinks I saved her father's life. Poor little girl! What a noble heart she must have, to be so grateful for so slight a service to her father!"

But her father worked himself into a perfect rage—for he had not very much else to do—when he heard that his daughter was at the trial.

“Go right after her, Florence,” he said to his wife.

When Mrs. Stuart came along, Flora was just emerging from the prison-gate.

“You foolish girl!” Mrs. Stuart said bitterly. “You will have the whole city talking about you.”

“Oh, my heart is broken, mother,” sobbed her daughter, “and I do not care what people say.”

“I am surprised at you, Flora, greatly surprised! It must have been your sojourn in Italy that has turned your head.”

“Oh, I am so broken-hearted, mother,” the poor girl cried, “I wish I could lie down and die.”

But her grief was only beginning.

When they got back to Thistledown, Robert Stuart, silent and grave, stood in the doorway, apparently awaiting their return; and allowing his wife to pass in, he stopped his daughter on the threshold.

“Well, Flora, where have you been?” he asked coldly, after Mrs. Stuart had gone upstairs. “Weren’t you at the trial?”

“Yes, father, I was,” the poor girl answered frankly, for she hated falsehood and deception of every kind, and could not dissemble.

“Where did you go then?”

“To the jail for a minute, to see Alex,” was the innocent though fatal answer.

“Well, Flora,” said her father with cold, stinging

bitterness, "you have made yourself the laughing-stock of the whole city. You have disgraced me and your mother after all we have done for you. Therefore, do not darken this door again;" and he slammed it in her face, and locked it against her.

"O God!" cried the poor girl in wild despair. "What have I done? What shall I do? Where shall I go? I am now friendless—homeless. Father, forgive me, forgive your poor broken-hearted Flora! Forgive me, forgive me," she sobbed bitterly. "O father, forgive me! Forgive poor Flora!"

But her father did not answer. He was deaf to her appeal.

Flora then wandered up the street until she met an old classmate named Kathleen Salford, who lived with a widowed mother at Fern Cottage, near the beautiful Northwest Arm; and it was here that Flora Stuart—once the light, the Lily of Thistledown, but now its poor wronged exile, broken-hearted and disgraced—found a refuge.

The poor girl received a very affectionate welcome from Mrs. Salford, who, although an exceedingly kind-hearted woman, was one of the most accomplished gossips in the city. It was therefore not surprising how quickly the news spread, that Contractor Stuart's only daughter had been driven from home.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

MEANWHILE Colonel Gordon was on his way to Halifax.

He had not as yet heard about the difficulties Alex had got into, so that his surprise must have been great on learning—from a copy of the *Halifax Evening News-Bulletin* which he bought as the train neared the city—that Alex had been found guilty of an attempt to murder a fellow-student. His interest in the case was at once aroused, and he read every word of the published evidence.

“I am not satisfied with the jury’s verdict in that attempt-to-murder case,” he said to a fellow-passenger who also seemed interested in the matter.

“Why? What’s wrong with it?”

“Well, I met that young doctor the first day I struck Halifax, and from what I saw of him I must say I find it hard to believe he’d be guilty of the like.”

“Do you know him well?”

“About as well as I know any one in this part of the country,” the Colonel answered.

“Strange things happen, you know.”

And the conversation dropped.

"Will that boat-racing on the Northwest Arm to-morrow be worth seeing?" the Colonel asked after a long pause.

"Guess so," answered the other. "Are you going?"

"I should like to, but to-morrow morning I have to attend to some matters in the Provincial Engineer's Office."

"Which you will find closed," added his fellow-passenger.

"Why?"

"Because to-morrow is the First of July—Dominion Day—and none of the government offices will be open."

"I see," said the Colonel. "A public holiday, eh?"

"Our Fourth of July."

"Which will mean that I shall have to remain in Halifax a day longer than I expected. But I am an optimist, and I believe everything happens for the best."

"So we shall likely see you out at the Arm in the morning."

"Cannot say," answered the Colonel, who had other plans maturing.

He wished to help Alex if it were possible. For he was the same old Clifford Gordon of the Indian wars, the Wyoming plains, and the Philippine campaign. But he had forgotten all about the terrible July day, long, long ago, on the hot sandy desert of San Antonio, Arizona, that he came across a fellow-scout whose

horse had died as much on account of thirst and the heat as from exhaustion, and to whom he gave from his own canteen, then almost empty, the last drink of water within a radius of perhaps sixty or seventy miles. He had forgotten, too, about the long, dreary night he had spent on the Wyoming plains after he had given his blankets and buckskin coat to a sick companion while he himself had to run about to keep from perishing with the cold. He had also forgotten about the wounded soldier he had carried on his back over a mile through the fever-swamp of San Rafael on the eve of Santa Estrella, the sharp engagement in which he was wounded—and about the thousand and one similar unselfish incidents of a singularly eventful life. His only thoughts were of the young doctor who had obliged him, and of how he could save him from perhaps unmerited punishment.

It was therefore with a very commendable object in view that—almost immediately after his arrival in Halifax—Colonel Gordon called on Mr. R. Henry Stoddard, K. C., the fiery and eloquent lawyer who had defended Alex.

“Sorry to disturb you after office hours,” said the Colonel, “but I am interested in that young doctor who was found guilty of an attempt to murder, to-day, and should like to do anything I could to help him.”

“Yes?”

And Mr. Stoddard looked the Colonel in the face.

“I am not satisfied with that verdict,” Colonel Gordon declared.

"Neither am I," Mr. Stoddard agreed. "Were you at the trial?"

"No," the Colonel answered. "All I know is what I read in the *News-Bulletin*."

"Well, the facts are these. One morning about six weeks ago, the prisoner went into Caretti's Candy Store and bought a half-pound box of a certain brand of high-grade chocolates which were manufactured by Caretti himself. Next day—as appears from the postmark—this same box of chocolates was mailed to the unfortunate Harry Lawson who was in his room with a fellow-student named Dick Rogers when the postman called—reviewing lectures and text-books on Surgery in preparation for their final examination in that subject, which was to have taken place the next day. About five o'clock in the evening, both students took a walk up street, Dick Rogers returning to his own boarding-house; and about six, Harry Lawson came back to his room, opened the box of chocolates, and never suspecting that anything was wrong, ate three or four of them. Almost immediately he contracted a severe headache which was accompanied by giddiness, nausea, and numbness. He tried to cross the room to his bed, but fell heavily on the floor.

"The unusual noise caused by his fall aroused his kind-hearted landlady who rushed into his room, only to find him prostrate on the floor, and in convulsions; his face livid, his breathing slow, his eyes prominent and staring, his jaws set. With rare presence of mind she forced his mouth open, and by thrusting her finger

down his throat, caused him to vomit, so that when Dr. Stanley Edwards came a couple of minutes later—for he only lived a few hundred yards distant—he was easily able to diagnose the case as one of hydrocyanic-acid poisoning on account of the strong odour of bitter almonds given off by the vomit; and, after sending out one messenger for two other doctors to assist him, another, to notify the Chief of Police, began his fight against death.

“The regular city detective was absent in New York, but Detective Presland of the Commercial Detective Agency was at once engaged on the case—and it did not take him long to gather enough evidence to make an arrest. For several of Alex’s fellow-students gathered at Lawson’s boarding-house that night, and Fred Bludgeon, noticing the similarity between the prisoner’s handwriting and that on the box of chocolates, happened to mention the matter to Presland, as a joke, Fred’s friends say, but I suspect it was on account of a certain soreness or jealousy over some young lady in the city named Flora Stuart, although this was not brought out at the trial. But to continue my story. Alex’s room at Hawthorne Cottage was searched next morning while he was at the college, and a bottle of potassium cyanide was found concealed in the toe of an old slipper.”

“Pardon me, Mr. Stoddard, but did Fred Bludgeon appear at the trial as a witness?”

“No,” Mr. Stoddard answered, “he had been drinking almost continually since he failed to pass his

final examinations at the Maritime University until a few days ago, when he took the D. T.'s. He is now confined in a padded room in the hospital, and I believe his condition is regarded as very serious."

"I see," said the Colonel, who made a note of this.

"Immediately after the bottle of tablets was found in the prisoner's room," continued Mr. Stoddard, "a warrant was issued and Alex was arrested. He was at the college at the time—just entering the examination hall to write his last examination paper. You can imagine what a surprise he must have got! The examiner was able to induce the police officer to wait, however, until the examination was over; and strange to say, the fellow did as well in this examination as in any of the others, for he led his year in every subject."

"What object could he possibly have in attempting to murder Lawson?" asked the Colonel.

"Jealousy was the motive claimed by the prosecution," Mr. Stoddard answered, shaking his head. "Lawson, you know," he added, after a pause, "was the prisoner's rival in Surgery—but there was no evidence of any bitterness between them."

"Did I understand you to say that he led the examination in Surgery, too?"

"Yes."

"With a police officer at the door with a warrant for his arrest?"

"Yes."

"Strange, indeed!" exclaimed Colonel Gordon, who also made a note of this.

"The preliminary hearing of the case came off the following morning," Mr. Stoddard continued, "and Alex was committed for trial. He elected to be tried by a jury—and you know the rest."

"Who is this John Squinger, handwriting expert?"

"He is an ex-manager of a bank—does an insurance and real estate business, audits accounts, et cetera; and although I heartily despise the man, I must admit that he is an exceptionally clever fellow."

"Why did he leave the banking business?"

"He was a trifle too thirsty, I guess."

"I see."

"I handled him kind of roughly at the trial to-day," Mr. Stoddard then declared with considerable satisfaction, "but his evidence was very strong and convincing."

"How about an application for a new trial?" asked the Colonel.

"What's the use?" Stoddard protested. "Of course the Code provides that the Court before which a trial takes place may, either during the sitting or afterwards, give leave to a person convicted of an indictable offence to apply to the Court of Appeal—in this province the Supreme Court in banco—for a new trial on the ground that the verdict was against the weight of evidence, and the Supreme Court in banco may, upon hearing such motion, direct a new trial if it thinks fit. Then again there is another provision to the effect that if, upon the application for the mercy of the Crown on behalf of any person convicted

of an indictable offence, the Minister of Justice entertains a doubt whether such person ought to have been convicted, he may, instead of advising His Majesty to remit or commute the sentence, after such enquiry as he thinks proper, by an order in writing direct a new trial at such time and before such Court as he may think proper; and I know of a recent case where a new trial was granted by the Minister of Justice, under this provision, on the discovery of new evidence. But here the verdict, in my judgment, was not against the weight of evidence."

"Was the handwriting-expert's testimony corroborated?" asked the Colonel.

"Yes," answered the lawyer, "by four or five of Alex's fellow-students who reluctantly admitted that they thought the hand-writing on the wrapper was his."

"No corroboratory testimony by an expert, though?"

"None."

"How about Alex's own evidence? Didn't he deny everything point blank?"

"Yes. From the very first he denied everything, except having purchased at Caretti's a box of chocolates similar to the one found in Lawson's room. He claims, however, that he either lost it or that it was taken from his pocket. Besides, he made no admission of guilt to any one, so far as I am aware. He asked me to put him on the witness stand, and you've read the report of his evidence, which was a sweeping

denial of everything. He was not cross-examined at all, and the learned counsel for the prosecution in addressing the jury, asked them not to pay much attention to his evidence. 'You know the weakness of human nature,' he said, 'and what a strong temptation there is for a prisoner, especially a young professional man, to try to save himself at any cost.' The judge's address was calm and fair—a careful *résumé* of the evidence. You know the result."

"Was Mr. Caretti able to identify Alex as the person who bought that particular box of chocolates?" the Colonel then asked, eager to find a loophole if possible.

"Caretti's evidence on that point wasn't very strong," answered the lawyer. "But it was the evidence of an honest man, and carried great weight. 'I couldn't be positive,' he said in answer to a question relative to Alex's identity, 'but so far as I know, judging from the prisoner's size and appearance, he is the man. I know the box,' he added, 'for it was the first I sold of that make. Besides, it bears my private mark.'"

"Well," said the Colonel, not a little discouraged, "innocent or guilty, I shall do anything consistent with honour to help him, for I find it very hard to believe he's guilty."

He then took leave of Mr. Stoddard—interviewed the sheriff, and after getting permission to see Alex at any time, called at the jail.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THAT OTHER TRIBUNAL.

DOMINION DAY!

Patriotic old Halifax had donned her gayest holiday attire, but processions, band-music, boat-racing, horse-racing, picnics, excursions, had little or no attraction for Colonel Gordon who was up early that morning, having decided to devote the whole day to helping Alex.

"What kind of a fellow is this John Squinger I hear so much about?" he asked the proprietor of the Blue-nose, after coming out from breakfast.

"Well, Colonel," answered Mr. Connaghy, who did not like Squinger, "he is possibly the most contemptible fellow I know—and I know a lot of mean fellows: one of the notorious bad pays of the city; a man who plays cards for money without money, who is always borrowing, and who never pays his debts of honour. But he has been very flush of late, wherever he made the raise."

Captain Roderick arrived in port the night before. Three or four days previous to this he had learned in Louisburg that Alex had been arrested, and at once

set sail for Halifax with the intention of being present at the trial. The weather was unfavourable, and it took him longer than he expected.

On coming ashore that morning, he called at the jail but was refused admission.

"Get a written permit from the sheriff and I'll let you in," said the old turnkey.

When the old smuggler came back from the sheriff's office he made his presence at the gate known by rather vigorously ringing the old bell.

"Who's there?" growled the old turnkey who knew very well it was Captain Roderick back again.

"Open that gate!" the old smuggler demanded.

"Where's your permit?"

And Captain Roderick had to produce it before he was admitted to the jail.

"Skin out of my sight now," he said to the old turnkey as soon as he reached Alex's cell. "You's are only a servant of the people, and you's needn't be so struck on yourself."

The old turnkey did not reply. He merely threw his shoulders back, and stuck out his little chest to look more dignified.

"Wal—poor old sonny," said the old smuggler, addressing Alex. "I didn't expect to find you here whatuver. But what are you's here for? Did you's give any of those sassy city fellows a lickin'?"

"I'm here for attempting to murder a classmate, they say," Alex answered bitterly, and he told Captain Roderick everything that happened from first to last.

"Wal," said the old sea-dog, "that's simply duvilish. Stop you to I bu'st those bars out into the jail-yard. Come here, old Jingle-keys."

"My dear old friend," said Alex, "be careful. Don't do anything rash."

"Wal—that is make no difference," said the old smuggler, "they has no business to have you here whatuver. I'm goin' to start in doin' some detective work myself. Down at Big Frog Pond we had an old black-and-white duck that used to hide her nest, and away she'd go uvery morning to lay. Wal—one night I locked her in the barn, and kept her in late next morning; and when she came out she quacked around a little, and then made a bee-line for her nest—in such a duvil of a hurry, too, that she forgot that any one was watching her. Did you p'ison that Law-son fellow, sonny?" he then asked bluntly.

"No," Alex answered, looking him straight in the face.

"Then some one did," said the old sea-dog, "and he, she, or it, must be located whatuver. So good-bye. I'm goin'!"

"Good-bye, my dear old friend," said Alex with a ring of genuineness that touched the old smuggler's heart.

"Here's a twenty for fightin' purposes, sonny," the old smuggler whispered, tossing Alex a twenty-dollar gold piece. "So—so long!" he added, hastening towards the door.

The old turnkey followed him out, and across the yard, and then slammed the gate after him.

"What does you's mean?" demanded Captain Roderick, who retaliated by ringing the old bell so viciously that it alarmed the whole neighbourhood, old Jingle-keys loudly remonstrating from behind the high board fence that separated them. But the old sea-dog did not desist until he had evened up matters with His Majesty's officer of the law. He then made a bee-line for the hospital, intending to visit a sick sailor he used to know well.

Meanwhile through the kindness of the prothonotary, in whose office the exhibits in Alex's case were on file, Colonel Gordon had been able to examine the handwriting on the wrapper of the deadly box of chocolates, and to compare carefully the handwriting on the same with specimens of Alex's handwriting which he obtained the evening before; and being a skilled and accurate draughtsman, he succeeded in getting exact copies of the handwriting on the wrapper and that on the label of the bottle of poison, by placing pieces of thin tracing paper over them. Then laying aside the copies, he carefully examined the handwriting on the wrapper with the aid of a powerful microscope, and made an accurate drawing of the same in its magnified form. When he compared this drawing with his own specimens of Alex's handwriting, now under the microscope, his handsome face lit up with a bright smile; then, handing the wrapper and the bottle of poison back to the prothonotary's

clerk, and gathering up his drawings, he left the courthouse for his hotel.

About noon Captain Roderick again called at the jail.

"Wal—sonny," he said, "I was to the hospital sence, to see old Clam-shell, and the poor duvil is not long for this world. I was feelin' purty bad, I tell you, when I came out, but I had to laugh at a fellow they was callin' Frederick Bludgeon who was in charge of a special attendant, settin' out under the shade of the trees. He's got the D. T.'s—and a funny specimen he is. He thinks the whole place is full of duvils—and he sees them climbin' the trees, runnin' along the top rope of the tennis net, racin' up and down the walk, and runnin' back and forth on the top of the hospital. But uvery now and then he'd say, 'He's got all my money, John Squinger has; the two thousand dollars I made in stocks.' Then the little duvils 'd start in botherin' him again. 'Look at that little duvil tryin' to open my shoe—and this little duvil tryin' to get into my vest pocket. Look!' he says to the fellow that was with him, holdin' up a shaky hand, 'I've got him by the foot. That's the little duvil that took the box of chocolates out of Alex's pocket.' And so on. You nuver see'd such a fool. But I didn't say nothing. I just kept wonderin' how, why, where, and if—John Squinger got two thousand dollars out of him, and if he was the one that took that box of chocolates from your pocket."

Alex said nothing, but when Colonel Gordon called, a little later, they went carefully into this matter.

As soon as the Colonel got back to the Bluenose, he asked Mr. Connaghy if he would be kind enough to call up Squinger's office on the 'phone.

"Certainly," answered the obliging proprietor.

"And tell him, if you will, that I wish him to call to see me at my room here."

"Right away?"

"Yes, if he can come now."

Mr. Connaghy then went to the telephone and with a little patience succeeded in getting Squinger at his office.

"You're wanted at the Bluenose right away," said Connaghy. "Room 11."

"Who wants me?" asked Squinger who spoke as if he were somewhat excited.

"Colonel Gordon, President of the Hunting River Railway and Coal Company, who came in here from Cape Breton last night."

Squinger thought for a few seconds, then answered:

"All right. I'll be right over. I suppose he wants me to start a set of books for him," he added to himself as he hung up the receiver. He was soon disabused of that idea when he met Colonel Gordon face to face in Room 11, a few minutes later.

"I am interested in that attempt-to-murder case," the Colonel began; "that attempt-to-murder case which was disposed of yesterday, and in which a young doctor of my acquaintance figured rather promin-

ently. I may mention at the outset that he was one of the very first persons I met in Halifax, and I must say I was very favourably impressed with him. He struck me as a fine, sensible fellow of excellent moral character. You can imagine my surprise, then, when I read in last night's *News-Bulletin* that he had been found guilty of one of the most cowardly of crimes—that of attempting to murder a classmate by sending a box of loaded chocolates through the mails. Needless to say, my interest was at once aroused, and I read the evidence very carefully. It is hardly necessary to add that I was very much dissatisfied with the jury's verdict, and as this young doctor was of very valuable assistance to me in deciding whether or not I'd have anything to do with the Hunting River coal areas, I felt that, as a matter of gratitude, my interest should take some practical shape. I therefore interviewed the attorney who defended him, and have since been engaged on what a professional detective would call an alternative theory. And the more I look into the matter the more I am convinced of this young man's innocence, for I believe he has been the victim of a cowardly conspiracy for his ruin."

Here the Colonel paused a minute or two, looking Squinger straight in the eyes—then telephoned to the clerk's office, and had the hotel register sent up to his room.

"Yes," he then continued, "young Dr. Alex has been the innocent victim of a cowardly conspiracy for his ruin. In the first place no young man in his posi-

tion would do the like unless he were insane. But he was not insane. Nor is he insane now. Besides, what object could he have in murdering Lawson? None whatever. There was no evidence of bitterness of feeling between them; on the contrary, they appear to have been the best of friends. An ambitious young doctor would not do the like under the circumstances—when his final examinations were about over. It's not human nature. Why, the very fact of his having led his class in the subject on which he wrote while under arrest—with a police officer at the door of the examination hall waiting for him—convinces me beyond the shadow of a doubt that he was innocent. Now for what a professional detective would call the alternative theory which Mr. Presland of the Commercial Detective Agency failed to discover. Let me analyze it, too, and show you that it is a very reasonable one.

“It appears that Fred Bludgeon became very much attached to a beautiful young lady of this city almost immediately after her return from Italy. It also appears that she did not reciprocate his love, it being quite natural that she should love instead, the handsome young student who saved her father's life. Fred at once became insanely jealous, and began to plan revenge. Then you appeared on the scene. You and Fred were old friends and he naturally went to you for advice, and, I suppose, sympathy also. You were hard up at the time—with over a thousand dollars' worth of forged paper maturing in the Consolidated,

and by a sort of fluke that sometimes happens in amateur stock-gambling, Fred made over two thousand dollars which you simply had to have. You had nothing to offer in return but your villainy, and that seems to have been liberally at his command. The story, then, may be briefly told. Fred took that box of chocolates from Alex's pocket—no doubt they were intended for Flora Stuart—and gave them to you. Now, here is a tracing of the label on that bottle of poison; and here"—producing the hotel register—"is the signature of A. S. Preston, who, I understand, travels for Cascara, Sagrada & Company, Limited. Note the similarity between the *P*, *s*, *o*, and *n* of Preston's signature, and that of the *P*, *s*, *o*, and *n* of '*Poison*' written on the label. Besides, Preston visited Halifax seven days before the chocolates were loaded. The conclusion is obvious—Preston supplied the tablets.

"Again: here is a clipping from the *News-Bulletin*, furnished by the news editor, which shows that several cats and dogs were poisoned in Hull Street Park—very near where you board—about three days before the crime in question was committed. It is clear, therefore, that the poison was furnished in good faith by Preston to help you rid that part of the city of its feline and canine population.

"But what object could you possibly have in getting Lawson out of the way? I have already said you had over one thousand dollars worth of forged paper maturing at the Consolidated, and a note supposed to

have been signed by Lawson was the first to come due. He got next to the forgery, and you wanted to get rid of him before you could be brought to justice. Just then Fred Bludgeon came along with a box of chocolates he had taken from Alex's pocket, no doubt only intending to hold it for a day or two as a joke. He also had a note-book belonging to Alex with him at the time, and you had your poison. Fred was insanely jealous of Alex, and you were lying in wait for Lawson. Fred had two thousand dollars to lend you—to give you, would be the proper way to express it—and your wonderfully bright intellect soon conceived a plan of action by which you could get rid of Lawson and involve Alex. Fred gave you Alex's note-book and chocolates. You loaded the chocolates with poison, and imitated the handwriting in the note-book when you wrote Lawson's address on the wrapper. Then, the bottle of tablets was placed in Alex's room by Fred who had free access to it at almost all hours of the day and night. Then again, at the trial, it was easy enough for you, as handwriting-expert, to hide your villainy—and you did. Your cleverly planned scheme was successful—yes, eminently successful. Not only that, but you succeeded in bluffing Detective Presland, who, I understand, enjoys a reputation for uncommon shrewdness. Thanks to you and Fred Bludgeon, he started off on the wrong scent—and Fred's absence as a witness was the rock upon which Mr. Stoddard's defence went to pieces. You made a bad mistake when you put too much whiskey into

Fred's delicate stomach; for now, at intervals between his ravings about little devils, he takes occasion to refer to the two thousand dollars you got out of him, and to the box of chocolates he took from Alex's pocket. You are the real villain—the real criminal in the case," he then concluded, seizing Squinger, who, pale, silent, excited, and more or less broken in health, too, on account of worry and remorse, fell to the floor in a faint.

"Save me," the wretch gasped, as soon as he regained consciousness, "save me!"

"Save a scoundrel like you?" the Colonel said coldly,

"Save me, oh, save me!" he sobbed, getting on his knees before the Colonel, who, not being a professional detective, only wanted to help Alex.

"Yes," agreed the Colonel, "on condition that you go to the judge and tell him that you were wrong in your expert testimony in that case."

"I shall, indeed, gladly go, if you will give me your word of honour as a gentleman that you will never divulge what took place between us, provided, of course, that I do as you request."

"You have my word of honour, then."

Immediately after leaving the hotel, John Squinger made straightway for Judge MacFarlane's residence, resolved to keep his agreement with Colonel Gordon.

The venerable judge received him kindly, and expressed sorrow, too, at seeing him looking so unwell.

"I wanted to see you a minute, Judge," he said,

"to tell you that I was wrong in my opinion about the handwriting on that wrapper. It wasn't——"

He then went into a second faint. But before he regained consciousness, he was summoned to appear before another Judge—and had his case tried by a tribunal infinitely higher and more perfect than the poor, fallible human court he himself had been able to mislead.

Kind-hearted old Judge MacFarlane was very much affected at so sudden a death under such strange circumstances, and at once telephoned for Mr. Stoddard and Crown Prosecutor Elliot, who came without delay, Mr. Stoddard bringing Colonel Gordon with him.

The Judge then told them what Mr. Squinger had said before he fell, and asked them if they could give him any explanation.

Colonel Gordon was the only one who could explain Squinger's strange utterance, but he was a man of honour, and his lips were sealed.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE.

IMMEDIATELY after Alex was sentenced to St. Jean Penitentiary for ten years, Mr. Stoddard made an application for the mercy of the Crown on behalf of his client, and the Minister of Justice, entertaining grave doubts that Alex should have been convicted, instead of advising His Majesty to remit the sentence, after making a careful enquiry into the matter, directed, by an order in writing, that a new trial be held on the first Tuesday of September.

Meanwhile Alex remained in jail, his sentence having been suspended by express direction of the Court until the Minister of Justice should give a decision; and when the new trial came off before another judge, and another jury, there were no less than five disinterested handwriting-experts who gave testimony. Not only that, but they were unanimous in holding that the handwriting on the wrapper was merely a clever imitation of Alex's handwriting. They had ample material to judge from, too, for previous to the trial he gave them all the specimens of his handwriting they desired. Besides, it soon became generally known that suspicions pointed to Squinger as

being the real criminal, although the matter was not brought out publicly. Alex was therefore acquitted. But he felt like a person who had been beaten all over with a club, and after spending four months in jail, his health was none too good.

Flora Stuart was at the trial, for there was no one to prevent her now; and when the foreman of the jury announced the verdict, she was so delighted that she cried.

Poor girl! Little did Alex know all that she had suffered for his sake—that she had incurred the displeasure of her father—that she had been driven from home. She did not tell him. He did not even know that she loved him; he only knew that she had changed since he saw her last—that she had grown sadder-looking if more beautiful.

"Free again!" she cried with delight as soon as she had an opportunity of speaking to him, for she waited on the sidewalk until he came out of the courthouse.

"Yes, free again," he answered, a little bitterly, "after the way they have used me. But I am leaving here to-morrow—leaving old Halifax forever!"

A look of pain came over Flora's sad face, and bright tears filled those lovely eyes in which that old, old, tell-tale love-light shone.

"You are not going forever, I hope?" she asked.

"Why should I ever return?" he answered. "What have I to hope for here? I am leaving to-morrow, and am going to the West."

"Perhaps it is better," said Flora softly.

"Yes, I know it is better, Miss Stuart. I feel it is very much better. Something seems calling me to the West. I do not know what it is. It may be Death—Death far over the treeless waste of prairie—beyond the snow-capped mountains—Death, calling, calling, calling! Whatever it is, it fascinates me—bids me come away. In the days of my happy boyhood, too, I dreamt of the West—I had often longed to be there as I used to watch from my humble country home, the floods of golden light that came over the waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence from the setting sun. I am going now, whatever my fate may be."

Poor Flora! Little did Alex know what those moments cost her. But he could do nothing but leave.

"I have a lot of things to attend to," he added, "so must be going. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye!" said Flora with a calm, sweet resignation which was not without hope. "Good-bye!"

They parted thus. Poor Flora! Their parting cost both much suffering, but think of the poor little girl that had been driven from home because she loved him! Oh, if he only knew, how much suffering it might have saved! He did not even know that she was an exile from home—she did not tell him.

Their bitter parting over, she hurried home—not to Thistledown but to Fern Cottage where she was as welcome as the sunlight of heaven—for instead of being a burden to her kind benefactress, Mrs. Salford, who

was only a poor widow, she had been a comfort and a help. From the time she had been driven from home she taught music and singing, and thus helped Kathleen to keep the wolf from the door.

"Trial over?" asked Mrs. Salford when Flora returned.

"Yes, and Alex's free!" Flora answered.

"Isn't that good, dear?" exclaimed Kathleen. "Mother and I have just finished your new white dress."

"How good of you!" said Flora, tears of gratitude filling her lovely eyes.

"So you can sing to-night after all, Flora; in spite of people, too!"

This reference was to Robert Stuart.

It appears that a few days before this, Flora had been asked to sing at a patriotic concert, which was to come off the first Tuesday of September, but when she sent home after one of her dresses, her father refused to let her have it. Kathleen was terribly annoyed; she at once purchased some white material and the necessary trimmings for a new dress for Flora, and she and her mother worked late and early to have it finished in time. But fate was cruel to Flora. One would have thought, too, that she had suffered enough for having gone to the jail to see Alex—which was nothing more than a girlish indiscretion—but fate had another blow to deal—perhaps the hardest yet. For that very evening, after she had dressed for the concert, too, she received a letter from Professor Raleigh

saying that Mrs. Glyn, Miss Grainard, Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Glave, Miss Filburn, Miss Tucker, and Miss Gladney, who were the leading singers, one and all refused to take part if he did not strike her name off the programme. "It just breaks my heart," the poor old man declared. But he had to do it.

Flora said nothing. She suffered in silence—her grief was a grief without tears. She felt as if she were an outcast, and her heart was broken.

Kathleen tried to cheer her, but it was no use.

"I feel as if I were going to faint, Kathleen dear," she said at length.

But before her devoted friend could get to where she was, she fell on the floor, and did not regain consciousness until a couple of hours later.

"Are you better now, Flora dear?" asked kind-hearted Mrs. Salford, after giving her a couple of sips of hot lemonade.

Although conscious, the poor girl did not seem to know her benefactress, for her thoughts wandered to the scenes of the day.

"Good-bye!" she answered softly. "Good-bye!"

"Oh, you poor little girl!" sobbed Mrs. Salford.

"Look!" cried Flora, rising from her bed and pointing to something she seemed to see in the distance. "Something seems calling me to the West. I do not know what it is. It may be Death—Death far over the treeless waste of prairie—beyond the snow-capped mountains—Death, calling, calling, calling! Whatever it is, it fascinates me—bids me come away."

"Oh, how they have wronged you, my dear little friend!" said Kathleen with pitying tenderness.

Poor Flora did not understand.

"Good-bye!" she said softly. "For the night is coming. It is here. But through the darkness, I see the dawn; and the bright day that is coming will never end. You were so kind," she added; "so kind—so kind——"

"Oh, don't talk that way, dear," sobbed Kathleen. "You are breaking my heart. We weren't half kind enough to you."

The poor sick girl then fell asleep. Towards morning she grew worse, and after whispering a few loving expressions of gratitude into Kathleen's ear, lapsed into a state of coma out of which they failed to get her.

Her father and mother were then sent for, and when they came they were taken upstairs to the humble little room in which their lovely daughter lay.

It was only then that Robert Stuart realized his heartless cruelty, and as he knelt at her bed, beside his wife, he would have given all he possessed to have her restored to health.

"Flora," sobbed her mother. "Speak to me, Flora. One word, my only child, to say that you forgive us for the way we wronged you."

Silent were those thin, blue, sensitive lips; pale, those lovely cheeks from which the ruddy bloom of health had fled; and in that loyal breast feebly beat the noble heart that now—was broken.

Dr. Kent-Richards was sent for. . . . He came. . . . And lifting the poor girl's limp arm, which hung by the side of the bed, tried her feeble pulse.

"Is there any hope?" sobbed Mrs. Stuart.

"Poor child!" said the great, kind-hearted doctor, affectionately stroking Flora's hand. "God only knows what you have suffered."

"Is there *no* hope?" cried Mrs. Stuart in wild despair.

"Hope?" he answered sadly. "I am afraid—this poor little broken-hearted child will not recover."

CHAPTER XL.

THAT MAMMOTH TOMB.

MEANWHILE work was being rapidly pushed forward on the first section of the Hunting River Railway by the Chief Engineer—Reginald Reiver Todd. Mr. Lariviere had already completed his contract for grading, and was now laying the rails. The shipping-pier at Beaton's Landing was fast nearing completion; Mr. Bancroft had completed a very serviceable bankhead and was getting the mine into shape for raising coal—and Colonel Gordon was optimistic.

"We'll be shipping coal yet before navigation closes," he said to himself one beautiful, fine, warm evening, about the middle of September, as he stood examining the workmanship of the massive shipping-pier after the men had gone home for the day; "that is," he added, "if everything continues to go all right."

He then turned to go home, too, but noticing a bark-canoe coming down the river, he waited.

"Must hurry up me," said the old Indian to himself as he paddled along towards the pier, "to get him wharf before beeg 'Merican man he go home."

He tried to make the canoe go faster. But he could

not, for he was very, very old, and did not seem to have any reserve strength left.

"Oh-ho!" he at length sighed, laying the paddle athwart the canoe. "Too old make him go faster."

He was tired, poor old fellow, and little wonder! He was nearly ninety years of age, and had come over three miles. He was hungry, too, not having had anything to eat since noon. But he was not unhappy, for the sun was setting, and a flood of soft, warm, golden light came across the sea and up the noble river; and the ravishing beauties of the scene—of wooded hill and narrow shore and gilded river—thrilled him with joy. And as he softly hummed the air of a strange song to the Great Spirit of the Wind and of the Clouds and of the Sea, the fascinating autumnal loveliness of his beloved Hunting River must have reminded him of those happy hunting grounds he expected to inhabit after death; of his heaven—beyond the beautiful hills, or in shades deeper than the gold-lit forests that covered them.

"Oh-ho!" he again sighed, waking from his reverie; and seizing the paddle, resumed his journey towards the pier.

Colonel Gordon met him at the shore.

"Goot-'ay!" he said.

"Good-day!" the Colonel replied pleasantly.

"You boss-over-all—this job?"

"Yes, why?" answered the Colonel, considerably amused.

"Buy him pick-handles—you?"

"How many have you got?"

"Dozen—myself."

"How much?"

"How much yourself give?" asked the old Indian, looking up into Colonel Gordon's handsome face.

"Name your price," answered the Colonel.

"Two for quarter, my price. Dollar fifty—dozen."

"Did you make them yourself?"

"Yes; make him all myself."

"And how long did it take you?"

"Mebbe week, mebbe more."

"I see. But how old are you?"

"Me? Ninety year, next Christmas sometime."

"Well, well," said the Colonel pleasantly, "you certainly earned your money."

And after the old Indian had landed the bundle of pick-handles, he took a bright five-dollar gold piece from his pocket and tossed it into the canoe.

"You are so smart for an old man," he said, "that I'm giving you five dollars for them out of my own pocket."

"T'ank you, sir!" exclaimed the old Indian, almost weeping for joy, for never in his long, long life had he owned a gold piece before.

"Now tell me," said the Colonel, "which would you rather—the old days before the white man cut down your forests and scared away the wild game, or the present with its railroads and steamboats and conveniences."

"Ha-ha!" laughed the old Indian rather scornfully,

shaking his head, "like him old days better. Lots of fish, lots of game, lots of woods; but now fish nearly all gone, woods nearly all cut, wild game nearly all scart away. Railroad goot enough for rich people, but no money poor h' Indian man. Got him walk."

"So you're sorry we came," the Colonel ventured.

"No," the old Indian answered. "You got him beeg heart. Glad you come. But poor old h' Indian must be goin'. Gettin' late," he added as he pushed the canoe off with his paddle; "goin' home happy—me."

"That's good," said the Colonel. "Good-bye!"

"Goot-bye, sir, and good luck—yourself."

The Colonel watched the bark-canoe with its worn-out occupant until it was but a mere speck in the distance.

"Poor old fellow," he said to himself, as he, too, turned homeward; "a noble representative of a noble people who are now the wards of the civilization that destroyed them."

Early next afternoon Colonel Gordon had to drive out to the mines, although he would have much preferred waiting until the following day as he was feeling unwell—the severe wound he had received at Santa Estrella bothering him greatly, as it did only too often for his comfort. But he was sent for in haste by Mr. Bancroft, and he went at once.

"Well, Mr. Bancroft, what's the trouble? How are things going?" he asked on arrival.

"Not very well," answered Bancroft who had just come up out of the mine. "The slope isn't in very good shape. The rock formation next to the plank casing seems to be swelling on account of exposure to the air, the plank casing not being perfectly air-tight. The plank doesn't seem to have been sufficiently seasoned when it was put in; hence there was a shrinkage, and the pressure is so enormous that I'm afraid the whole business'll crush in."

"When did you notice the trouble first?"

"Just noticed it about noon to-day."

"How far down does it extend?"

"Can't say. I noticed it first about forty feet or so from the surface."

"I must go down, then," said the Colonel whose handsome face wore an anxious look.

He forthwith donned a suit of overalls, and after lighting his lamp, went to the entrance to the slope where he got aboard a car that there awaited him.

"Tell the engineer to lower very slowly," he said, "as I want to make a careful examination."

Mr. Bancroft and Mr. Harvey, the underground manager, then got aboard the car with him.

The bell rang three times in the engine-room, and the engineer, turning a lever, slowly lowered them down into the mine which was several hundred feet under the sea, the entrance to the slope being at the top of a high and rocky cliff which rose perpendicularly from the shore to the height of about two hundred feet.

Presently there was a crash—a dull, heavy crash—and the engineer, thinking that the car had broken loose, at once sent an assistant named Billie White to the entrance of the slope, only to find that something worse had happened—the whole slope to within forty feet of the top had been crushed in as if it were only an egg-shell. White then ran to the airway near by to see if there was any possibility of escape for the men. But the airway had shared a similar fate; and Colonel Gordon, Mr. Bancroft, and Mr. Harvey, with about one hundred and fifty men, were buried alive, if a worse fate—that of being instantly crushed to death—had not overtaken them.

A great cry was at once raised, and there was a mad rush for the entrance to the slope. Soon a great crowd had gathered—a great grief-stricken crowd of men, and women, and children, who, helpless and excited, wept bitterly, there being none among them without either a father, a brother, a husband, a lover, or a friend, in that great, silent grave.

The sun shone as brightly, though, as if nothing had happened, gilding, as it journeyed towards the west, the great waves of the sea which rolled solemnly shoreward, dashing high up against the wall of rock that helped to form that mammoth tomb.

CHAPTER XLI.

"MY SHONNIE."

ON that memorable afternoon, at the very time the slope was crushed in, Reginald Reiver Todd was at Beaton's Landing, four and a half miles distant, superintending some work in connection with the shipping pier.

Presently a messenger, pale and excited, came running from the company's office to where he was.

"Mr. Todd, Mr. Todd!" he cried, almost out of breath.

"Yes. What is it?"

"You're wanted at the telephone at once. There was a terrible accident out at the mine, and Colonel Gordon with one hundred and fifty men, are buried alive, if not killed outright."

"What?" cried Mr. Todd, greatly shocked at the sad intelligence. "Can it be possible?"

"Terrible, isn't it?"

"Terrible, terrible, terrible," he repeated, and so saying, he rushed to the telephone.

"Yes," he answered sharply, putting the receiver to his ear.

"Mr. Todd?" said the man at the other end.

"Yes. What do you want?"

"The slope here just crushed in, and Colonel Gordon, Mr. Bancroft, and Mr. Harvey, with one hundred and fifty men, who were down in the pit at the time, are buried alive, if not killed outright. We don't know what to do. Come at once."

In less than twenty minutes Mr. Todd was at the scene of the disaster, where strong men, leaderless and grief-stricken, and women, hysterical and broken-hearted, walked stupidly about, some of them carrying little children in their arms.

"Poor Colonel Gordon," an old miner sobbed, "if we had him out itself, it wouldn't look so bad—and Mr. Bancroft, and Mr. Harvey! O God, it's terrible!"

"Ah, Mr. Todd," one hysterical woman cried, "what am goin' to do without my boy Shonnie, and she was so good to its mother! I will sue the company for it, that's all. Oh, my Shonnie is gone! My poor, dear Shonnie is gone! Oh, my Shonnie, my Shonnie, my Shonnie!"

"Can't you save my poor Donald, Mr. Todd?" another hysterical woman bawled. "For it was him that was good to me and the children."

This was too much for Mr. Todd, who, although exceptionally good-hearted, was very, very impulsive.

"This cussed nonsense must stop right here," he said sharply. "Let every woman and kid get home at once! You're not needed at all. Of course," he

added, as they reluctantly, very, very reluctantly, began to move away, "if you want something to keep you out of mischief, go home and pray. That will keep you busy for a while. But let it be understood once and for all that I want no tears around this rescue work. When the time comes for weeping, I shall take a hand in with you."

This went a long way to restore the confidence of the men, who not only now felt that they had a leader, but were willing to do anything such a leader might suggest.

"Ah, but it's that Todd talkin' whatever!" said the woman who first addressed him. "I s'pose, though," she added, upon second thought, "it's the only way to get them lazy men to do anything. Oh, but if he had a boy like my Shonnie down in that peet, she'd cry, too. Oh, my poor, dear Shonnie! My poor, dear boy!"

Now that the women and children were leaving the scene of the disaster, Mr. Todd rushed into the mine manager's office, where he carefully examined the various plans of the workings of the mine.

"Telephone to the Landing for Frank Forbes," he at length said, turning to Mr. Reynolds, the accountant. "I want him here at once, for he's the best rock foreman in this part of the country."

"Any hope, Mr. Todd?" asked Reynolds anxiously.

"There is only one hope," he answered quickly, "and that hinges on the condition of the slope below high-water mark; and as no man can tell what con-

dition it is in, I must confess that things look very discouraging indeed. But we must work while there's hope," and he darted out of the office.

Meanwhile the sad news had been telephoned to Clifton where the leading citizens at once organized a rescue party which proceeded without delay to the scene of the disaster. Mr. Hale, special correspondent of the *Halifax Daily Tribune*, was one of the number, which explains how a graphic account of the disaster appeared next morning, not only in the *Halifax Daily Tribune* but in every other newspaper in Canada and the United States getting Associated-Press news.

Telegrams of anxious enquiry began to pour into Clifton from leading American journals which had announced the sad news with great headlines, and unfeigned sorrow, too, for Colonel Gordon was a very prominent figure in United States military circles. Not only that, but he endeared himself to all classes of his fellow-countrymen by his conduct, brave, unselfish, humane, as commander of the famous Gordon Scouts.

Many leading American citizens, too, appear to have been affected by the news, for early in the afternoon Mrs. Gordon received a very kind telegram of enquiry and of sympathy from the President of the United States himself; and later on, similar telegrams came from the Governors of the States of New York, Rhode Island, Ohio, Nevada, Wyoming, and California, all of whom were personal friends of her distinguished husband. Kind and thoughtful as were

those telegrams, they were of little practical use now, for the work of rescue in this particular case was one which no outside sympathy or kindness could help along. It had to be done by such men on the spot as were available at the time.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE MAN OF THE HOUR.

As soon as Frank Forbes arrived at the Hunting River Coal Mines the previous afternoon, the rescue work began in real earnest.

"See here, Frank, old boy," said Mr. Todd, "I'm going to lower you over the cliff, immediately opposite the slope, and I want you to have a look around. There is only one hope, as I just told Mr. Reynolds in the office, and that hinges on whether or not the slope has given way below high-water mark. If it hasn't, then the quickest way to get in to where the men are, is to blow the whole cliff into the sea. Of course, if the slope is all gone, it will take weeks to get down into that great, silent tomb. There is no use thinking of clearing the wreckage out of the slope itself, as there would only be room for three or four men to work, and they would take a long time to get down even to high-water mark. But we shall see what we shall see, as I once heard a circus man say, so go ahead, Frank, old boy, and see what things look like on the face of the cliff."

"All right, sir," replied Forbes, who was forthwith lowered over the cliff in a boatswain's chair.

After dangling around for a few minutes, he at length spied a large fissure in the rock, and here he began the difficult work of getting ready for the first blast. It took considerable time, but Frank Forbes did the work as quickly as any other man in that part of the country could have done it, for he was an expert at railway construction work, and knew all about the peculiarities of rock and the difficulties and dangers of blasting it.

He at length gave a signal and was hoisted up. Presently he returned with about forty sticks of dynamite, and when he had everything ready, he was again hoisted to the top. A few minutes later there was a heavy, dull explosion, and great pieces of rock were sent high into the air and far out into the sea.

The blast had the desired effect. There was now more space to work upon, and several men, with sledges and drills, were lowered down over the cliff. The blasting went on all night long, and hundreds of cubic yards of rock were blown into the sea. But the work was very discouraging, for they had nearly two hundred and fifty feet of solid rock to go through before they should reach the slope, and by noon the following day they had only succeeded in getting in about fifty feet—which was indeed remarkable. Yet, how little, how very little, was accomplished towards the end in view! It would take at least five long days, working double shift, to reach the slope, and how

many of the men entombed therein, even though now alive, would, without food or water, be living then? . . . It was this horrible thought that caused a feeling of despair to blight the hopes of the bravest.

Late the evening before, the news of the disaster reached Mr. James Leslie, a venerable retired mine manager, living at New Perth, a charming little village on the Bras d'Or Lakes.

"Too bad, too bad," he said sadly, addressing the man who had brought him the news, the delightful Scottish burr in his accent, ordinarily as soft as the down of the thistle, being more pronounced than usual. "I must take a run to Hunting River colliery myself. Maybe I shall be of some help. It was I who prospected that property for old Mr. Archibald, and perhaps some of my old workings may be of some use to the poor men."

Although over eighty years of age, he was up at two o'clock that morning, and drove sixty long miles to Hunting River Coal Mines, arriving about noon, just as the last ray of hope was fast becoming extinguished.

He introduced himself to Mr. Todd, who received him most kindly, both retiring to the mine manager's office to talk over matters.

"I drove a tunnel in from the shore, right under yon ill-fated slope," said Mr. Leslie. "That was when I was in charge here years and years ago. Maybe it will be of some use in rescuing the men. The entrance, no doubt, has been long since covered

with slides from the hill above, but the tunnel was well timbered, and I'm sure it's there yet. We had a small wharf at the foot of the cliff where we used to ship a few schooner-loads of coal every summer. That was years since. The wharf was carried away by a storm and not a vestige of it remains. But the tunnel is there yet, or I'm very, very much mistaken."

At this juncture, Mr. Todd, whose nerves were considerably unstrung by overwork and worry, shouted with joy.

"Hoot, mon," said Mr. Leslie, smiling, "don't holler till you're out of the woods."

"Come along, my dear old fellow," said Mr. Todd, "and don't mind my nonsense. You take charge of this rescue work, and I shall do anything you say."

"No, no," Mr. Leslie protested, "but come along with me yourself, and we shall take a walk down to the shore and around to the cliff. Have a dozen men with picks and shovels come along with us, and I shall tell them what to do."

They forthwith left the office. Mr. Todd got the required number of men, and then, taking the venerable, white-haired Scotsman by the arm, helped him down to the shore, and around to the foot of the cliff, when Mr. Leslie, after carefully examining the spot to make sure of the exact location of the old tunnel, put the men at work digging away some earth that had come down from above.

"It shouldn't take them long, Mr. Todd," he said,

"for there doesn't seem to be a great deal of material to be moved before the end of the old tunnel will appear."

So it happened, for in less than an hour the earth obstructing the old entrance was moved away.

Mr. Leslie then led the way into the old tunnel which, considering the years since its abandonment, was in a fairly good state of repair.

"Come along in, Mr. Todd," he said. "Don't be afraid. I built this old tunnel myself, and saw that every timber was sound and well put in."

Together they went in, in, in, until they came to where part of the wrecked slope had been crushed into the tunnel—at a distance of two hundred and fifty-three feet from the entrance.

"Put your men to work here," said Mr. Leslie, "and in three or four hours they should have a passage cleared up to the slope which appears to be all right below high-water mark."

The best available miners, buoyant with hope, were then put to work to clear away the wreckage.

The day had been beautiful—one of those ideal autumn days—and thousands of people—men, women, and children—had gathered from far and near—excited, impatient, curious, hopeful, yet afraid—afraid that no one would be rescued alive from that mammoth tomb. Most of them were there all day long, and they were weary and heart-sick, too. They had to wait, however, but the suspense—the uncertainty—was dreadful. At length, as the sun was nearing the

western horizon, Mr. Leslie emerged from the tunnel leading a man with a lunch-can and a very pale face, who was so dazed when he came into the strong light of the setting sun that he did not know what to do or where to go.

The crowds of people on the cliff above were quick to notice that one man at least had been rescued, and a mighty cheer, as great as seven thousand people could give, went up for the grand old Scotsman whom they looked upon as a veritable deliverer.

The rest of the men groped their way out of the tunnel, one by one, while the cheering continued.

"Oh, look at my Shonnie, my Shonnie, my Shonnie!" screamed one woman who was perched on a rock near the edge of the cliff, her shrill voice easily distinguishable even amid such cheering, so hysterical was she with joy at seeing her son among the rescued.

The cheering stopped suddenly as the last man was taken from the slope and carried out of the tunnel by Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Harvey, Mr. Todd, and Mr. Leslie, a calm, restful look on his handsome face, now white as marble, and his hands folded on his breast.

"Colonel Gordon is dead!" was the almost instantaneous interpretation of the incident; and an intense, heart-rending silence settled down on the multitude. Hundreds, yea, thousands, wept bitterly—there was not a single heart in that vast multitude without sorrow, not an eye without tears.

The Colonel was not dead. True it was that be-

fore he went down into the slope he had been suffering from the effects of the severe wound he had received at Santa Estrella, and that when the slope was crushed in, he had received an ugly cut on the back of his head from a heavy pit-timber that struck him as he was helping Mr. Harvey out of an awkward position—but he was not dead. He was very weak, however, on account of loss of blood, loss of sleep, and lack of nourishment, and when he was carried out of the inky darkness of the damp slope into the bright sunlight of that perfect evening, he was considerably dazed. He soon realized the situation, and looking up at the great, grief-stricken multitude, feebly waved his hand.

“Colonel Gordon lives, too, thank God!” one man shouted, and the great cheer of thanks that went up to heaven from the thousands of thrice-happy spectators, will never be forgotten by those who heard it. It was overwhelming. Men grew dizzy with delight; women fainted, and had to be carried away.

Colonel Gordon was taken to the mine manager’s residence where his injuries were carefully attended to by two skilled surgeons; and when he had been made comfortable, Mr. Todd and Mr. Bancroft began to look around for Mr. Leslie. But the grand old man had meanwhile quietly slipped away unnoticed, amid the bustle, and excitement, and happiness, too, that for the time prevailed.

“Curse the luck!” said Mr. Todd. “I was think-

ing it would be the proper thing to give the dear old fellow a rousing reception in the Miners' Hall here. But he's gone!"

"Never mind now," said Mr. Bancroft. "When the Colonel gets well, we shall send for Mr. Leslie and shall give him a reception that will make his great big heart glad as long as he lives."

Ten days later he was sent for, not knowing—not even suspecting—what was ahead of him. But he got a welcome that made his heart glad. He was carried to a platform erected on the very cliff which a few days before had offered such resistance to the deliverance of the men, and, amid the throngs of people who had gathered there to honour him—cloudless sky above them, hushed sea beneath—he was presented with a very happily worded address and a large purse of gold which had been handsomely subscribed to by all the employees of the company from the general manager down; and when he arose to reply, he was greeted with a perfect storm of cheering which lasted fully twenty minutes.

"I am so overwhelmed with kindness," he was at length able to say, "that I am almost dumb." In a neat little speech he thanked the employees of the company for their handsome gift and the generosity which prompted them in giving it, and those assembled for the warmth of their splendid reception, "although," he added, with characteristic modesty, "I shall always be at a loss to know what I ever did to

merit such great kindness and such extraordinary evidences of good will."

After the people had cheered themselves hoarse, he was carried to the Miners' Hall, where the Provincial Workmen's Association gave a banquet in his honour.

CHAPTER XLIII.

ON THE DISTANT PRAIRIE.

FOR several years previous to this there had been successive failures in the crops throughout the Middle West—failures attributable to the droughts that came each year in June, which is the rainy month in that part of Canada, so that when the tide began to turn, general business was at a very low ebb. Each year the farmers had sown large crops; each year their crops had been almost a complete failure. It was therefore not unnatural that they should become discontented, and that some of them should grumble exceedingly. A large proportion had reason to grumble, too,—at the loan companies and banks; for the former were pressing them for payment of installments and interest on mortgages, and the latter were drawing their purse-strings so tightly that it was difficult for many an honest farmer to obtain sufficient money to enable him to keep his farm going until better times should come. Better times did come. The dark pall of depression that had been lowering, lowering, lowering over that part of the country, had

begun to lift. The farmers had sown larger crops than usual, and during the month of June there had been a generous fall of rain, which ensured an enormous crop. A cheerful optimism everywhere prevailed, and on every face was a happy, buoyant, expectant look. The dull times were over, the tide had turned, and with the turning had come a wave of prosperity that spread over the whole land. It was this that had attracted thousands of harvesters from the East—teachers, clerks, book-keepers, students, mechanics, and labourers of almost every description, young men and old men, the majority of whom had come with the intention of making a home for themselves in this land of sunshine and of skies that are cloudless, blue, and bright.

Evidences of unprecedented prosperity were to be met with on every side. In some of the older and more thickly settled portions of the country—north, south, east, west, as far as the eye could reach—there were fields of ripened wheat, golden and beautiful, stretching away to the horizon, with here and there tall wind-mills, large barns, and comfortable farm-houses to relieve the level monotony.

There was an enormous demand for labour, too, but the supply that came was greatly in excess of the demand, so that almost every available job in the country must have been taken by the time Alex arrived.

He applied for work at almost every employment agency in Winnipeg, but without success. He then

took a train for the country, and, as luck would have it, something happened to the engine, which caused a delay of half an hour at a little siding about forty miles out of the great prairie city. But long before the half-hour was up, Mr. Richard Hardtimes came prowling around looking for help.

"Wa'al," he said, going up to Alex who had stepped down on the platform to see what was wrong, and who was without doubt the ablest-looking passenger in sight, "mebbe you'd hire with a fellow for a couple of weeks to help him stack his wheat."

"What are you paying?" asked Alex.

"Wa'al," drawled the Shylock-natured old solitary, "let me see. I reckon you'd be wuth 'bout a dollar fifty a day and board. How does that ketch you fer a couple of weeks?"

"Don't know," replied Alex who was as independent as if he had ninety dollars in his purse instead of only ninety cents. "Can't you make it two a day?"

"Times is hard, you know," said Richard, "and money's scarce."

"Times hard!" laughed Alex. "Why, my dear sir, you farmers will make your fortune this year. Give me two a day and you'll get me," he added firmly, and he looked old Hardtimes straight in the face.

"Wa'al," said the crusty old fellow, "s'pose you'll have to get your price."

"I'll go then," said Alex, who forthwith surrendered his check to the baggage-master, claimed his

trunk, and in a few minutes found himself driving slowly along the trail which led to the Hardtimes house.

Ill-fed, ill-used, over-worked, sums up the treatment he received from his Hardtimes cook and employer; and when he was leaving at the end of two weeks Mr. Richard Hardtimes asked him to wait for his wages until the Hardtimes wheat should be sold.

"No," answered Alex, "not a minute will I wait. I want my money now, and I shall have it if I can get a lawyer in this country to act for me."

The Hardtimes purse, large and well-filled, then made its appearance, and Alex, after getting his wages in full, left for Prince Albert, a thriving town in the Northwest Territories.

On the very day of his arrival at Prince Albert, he met a man of the name of Joseph Buckaw who owned a small cattle ranch at Cow Creek, one hundred and fifty miles distant, and not having any position in view, hired with Buckaw for the winter at twenty-five dollars a month, and left for Cow Creek the following day.

The very next day after their arrival at Cow Creek, all the cattle on the ranch were rounded up and put into a corral—among the number being five strange cattle which belonged to Kentucky Ned, an old coloured rancher living a few miles south of the Saskatchewan River which was about forty miles below Cow Creek.

Next morning at daybreak, Alex was sent south

with the strange cattle, accompanied by a half-breed who was to act as guide.

Things went on smoothly at first, but half way to the river the guide sent in his resignation, leaving Alex and the cattle to take care of themselves. Alex kept on, however, the cattle going peaceably enough at first. After a time they got unmanageable—scattered, and were soon beyond control.

He then tried to get back to Cow Creek, but lost his way, and as any other tenderfoot would have done, began wandering around the rolling prairie in search of some familiar object which might possibly help him to get his bearings, until at length, about dark, he came across a narrow trail which led over a low range of hills at the foot of which lay the Saskatchewan River. The trail being distinctly visible at the other side, he urged his bronco across, although there was a swift current. When he reached the middle of the river, his bronco suddenly lost its footing and went down. It was ambitious, and made for the other side, no doubt dreaming of the medal it would receive later on from some humane society or other. But it was carried along with the current, and was only able to land a mile farther down after giving its rider a good ducking.

The night was dark and bitterly cold; Alex had to keep moving, even if he should not be able to locate Kentucky Ned's ranch; and although wet, tired, cold, hungry, he trudged on in search of the negro's hut, but nowhere could he see a single object which

would indicate that these treeless plains had ever been trodden by the foot of civilized man.

Towards midnight it began to snow, and very soon the whole prairie was covered. The night kept growing colder, the snow making it appear brighter. But nothing could dispel the cheerless, silent gloom that everywhere prevailed.

Still Alex trudged on, gaunt, jaded, hungry, cold, but he saw no human habitation on that treeless waste. He heard no sound—nothing to break the weird and awful silence of that dreary night.

But the longest night must end, and after every second had seemed to lengthen into a minute and every minute into an hour, the first dull gray streaks of dawn became visible in the east. Still, there was no sign of human habitation or trace of animal life; and with the daylight disappeared the last vestige of hope, for nothing could then be seen but sky and snow-covered prairie—one vast, overwhelming solitude.

About seven o'clock, however, he noticed a thin line of smoke rising skyward in the distance.

"What's that?" he cried, his pale face lighting up. "Guess I'll be able to make it," he added, flushed with hope.

The thought then occurred to him that he should rest and give his bronco time to eat. But there was no use, for the prairie had been swept by fire a few weeks before, and not a blade of grass was left.

About nine o'clock the sun came out hotly, a dry warm wind began to blow from the southwest, and in

a very short time the snow melted. Then nothing remained but the bare black prairie, without tree, without grass, without habitation.

Late in the afternoon Alex succeeded in reaching the mud-hut of a kind-hearted old Frenchman named Gustave the Trapper, who gave him a hearty welcome, not having seen a human being for nearly four weeks. Next day they both set out for Kentucky Ned's ranch, old Gustave acting as guide; and when they arrived, Alex was handed over to the old negro who cheerfully undertook the task of piloting the young tender-foot back to Cow Creek.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE WAG OF PARLIAMENT HILL.

A LETTER written by Alex was responsible—written in Mr. Richard Hardtimes' kitchen, too, but before he had spent his first night under the Hardtimes roof.

Captain Roderick received it in Halifax, eight days later, and leaving the *Rob Roy* in charge of Foxy Donald, he put some clothes into a bag which he threw over his shoulder, and at once proceeded to North Street Station where he somewhat unceremoniously boarded the caboose of a west-bound freight-train that was just leaving the yard. He then made love to the conductor with the result that he was a guest of the Canadian government all the way to Montreal where he took the west-bound transcontinental for Ottawa; and it was on his way thither that he met Jacob Nickle and Thomas Savon, two very stylishly dressed commercial travellers who were also going to the Canadian capital.

"What hotel are you's goin' to?" the old smuggler asked, on arrival at Ottawa.

"To the North Pole," answered Mr. Savon. "Coming with us?"

"Guess I will," said the old sea-dog, and he went.

It was then about twelve o'clock, and after having dinner at the North Pole Hotel, which was one of the leading hotels in the city, Captain Roderick made straightway for the Parliament Buildings. He wandered around and around the extensive grounds, and into one or two of the buildings, finding his way into the Speaker's gallery of the House of Commons, and out again, until he at length came across Senator Diddleum, kind and unassuming, genial and generous, known and loved as the Wag of Parliament Hill. Being a trifle drouthy, it was not unnatural that the old senator should invite Captain Roderick to the bar of the Senate to have a drink, nor was it a matter of wonder that the old sea-dog should have been a little curious to see the bar that was so much abused throughout the length and breadth of the land.

"Well, Captain, what do you think of Parliament Hill?" asked the old senator, after each had drunk off his glass of Scotch whiskey.

"Wal," answered the old smuggler, "it's a quare place whatuver. 'Where's the House of Commons?' I says to a fellow that was loafin' around the building. 'Does you's see that door over there?' he says; and I made a bee-line for it. 'Hello,' says the fellow that was collectin' the admission fee. 'Hello, yourself,' I says. 'Is this the House of Commons?' 'Sh-h-h!' he says. 'Is it?' I says. 'Yes,' he whispers as if he was at a wake, 'but they is prayin' now,' he says. 'Wal,' I says, 'that strikes me kind of funny.' 'It

does seem funny,' he says. 'Wal,' I says, 'they must be the quare prayers—a cross between the prayin' of the pharisee and that of the publican.' And he bu'sted out laughin'. 'Here, Jackie,' he says to as purty a little boy as uver I see'd, 'take this gentleman up to the Speaker's gallery.' 'How much to pay, sonny?' I says when I got to the entrance. 'Nothing,' says the kid. 'Wal,' I says, 'can I go down there in front?' 'Yes,' he says, 'you's can take any seat that isn't occupied.' So, to make a long story short, I sot right down at the end of the front pew. I was hardly seated when a sassy fellow in one of the back pews says, 'Take off your hat down there, old fellow.' 'I won't,' I says. 'Take off your hat or leave the premises,' he says. 'Look at those fellows in the pit,' I says. 'Nearly uvery one of them has his hat on,' I says, 'and on crooked.' 'I's'll give you two seconds to get yours off,' he says, takin' out his watch, and off my sou'wester came. But I niver heared such laughin' as when they see'd my bald head. 'Laugh, you fools, laugh,' I says to myself, and the fools kept on laughin' to at last an old fellow down in the pit by the name of Mr. Speaker got kind of riled, so the laughin' had to stop at onct.

"'The House is now ready for motions,' he says. 'Any motions?' he says. Wal—I niver know'd that they was times when you's wasn't allowed to move, so I moved around enough to do me to I could get out again. Nearly uverybody in the gallery moved, and they was more or less movin' in the pit below.

At last old Pillywinks, member for Billy-be-dee, got up. 'Mr. Speaker,' he says, 'I now beg leave to move that the House go into supply,' or 'into the supplies,' I forget which. But that is make no difference; they was a squall in the pit at onct, for uverybody appears to have a grudge against poor old Pillywinks who seems to be a very decent sort of fellow. It's quare, too. He didn't ask to move—he only begged leave to move like any other sinner. But that didn't seem to save him. 'Sit down,' says one or two. 'You's are out of order,' says three or four. But the poor old duvil was in the pink of condition, bein' much better dressed than any of those that was buckin' up against him. Ah, but it was a touchin' sight to see an old man denied the privilege of movin'! And what was makin' me mad was that those that was opposin' him was doin' twice as much movin' as he was, for they was bobbin' up and bobbin' down, here, there, and uverywhere. But poor old Pillywinks kept his feet without sayin' a word. 'Sit down,' says a great big economical fellow in one of the back pews. 'You's are only wastin' the time of the country,' he says. 'Mr. Speaker,' says Pillywinks, and they was a dozen hollered, 'Sit down!' 'But you's may as well hold your peace,' he says, 'for I have the floor, and I'm goin' to hold it.' And he lit on the whole outfit at onct. He sassed uverybody—the government, the opposition, the House, the Senate, and the gallery. 'Now,' he says, 'instead of movin' that this recalcitrant and misbehavin' House go into supply,' he says,

'I beg leave to move that it go into the committee of the hole,' whichever hole he meant I could niver find out. The House must have crawled in right off, for uverybody appeared satisfied, and the sassin' stopped. But something worse began."

"What was that?"

"What was that, Senator? Call it anything you like—it was duvilish. Of course the day was warm, and the session dragged on all summer from spring till fall, but that was no excuse for such carryin's-on. For the air was blue with blue-books that were bein' fired back and forth, and such cat-callin' and school-boy duvilment, I niver see'd in my life. At last the political quartette began singin' an old and well-know'd song about the William-goat—with a zinc-lined stomach and a proclivity for drinkin' ink—that followed Mary to school one day, and instead of waitin' patiently about till Mary did appear, got thirsty and indulged its well-know'd proclivity to the extent of swallowin' a bottle of blue writin'-fluid. It appears there was some dynamite in this particular bottle, and Billie thought 'twas cheese. He caught a severe pain—and he rubbed against poor Mary's side just the pain to ease. A blindin' flash of girl and goat followed—and Billy was seen no more. Then came the sorrowful refrain:

' Mary's soul to heaven went, to heaven went, to heaven went,
Mary's soul to heaven went, and Billy's went to——
Hump-de-doodle-doodle-do, doodle-do, doodle-do,
Hump-de-doodle-doodle-do, Billy's went——'
' Way down upon the Swanee River, far, far away, etc.'

It was duvilish. It shocked my sense of propriety, too, for I expected to hear some highfalutin oratory instead of bein' suddenly ushered into what you might call a gymnasium with a second-class theatre on the side."

"More steam, Captain!" cried Senator Diddelum.

And the necessary steam soon came in the form of another round of Scotch whiskey.

"Wal," the old smuggler declared, laying down his glass, "they certainly have a quare way of makin' matches here in Ottawa."

"How's that?" asked the genial Wag of Parliament Hill.

"How's that?" Captain Roderick repeated. "Let me give you's an instance. After the carryin'-on in the pit abated, my attention was turned to some gib-gabbin' that was goin' on behind me. Of course it was two women, one a purty girl about twenty, the other an old hen—anywhere from fifty to fifty-nine. For it appears," he went on to explain, "that old Billy Ketcheman, of Montreal, has a surplus of good-lookin' daughters, and that Mrs. Eliza Bibblebeau, of Sparks Street, an old friend of the Ketcheman family, invited Billy's daughter Maud to visit her durin' the session, to give that ambitious young lady an opportunity of settin' her cap for one of the federal eligibles. It also appears that old William Suckaveck, hailin' from Dingleddale, was a matrimonial possibility, havin' lots of money, although the misfortunate fellow wasn't even tolerably good-lookin'.

"A cap was set the next day after Maud's arrival at the federal loafin'-place. But her heart was double-barrelled, and she fell in love with old Suckaveck's money, on the one hand, and with Robert Ford, a handsome young departmental clerk about her own age, on the other. 'It's no use, Maud,' says her society-pilot, 'you's are only sp'ilin' your chances. Robert is handsome, 'tis true. But he only gets four hundred a year, and you can't live on love, my dear,' she says. She wasn't far astray, either, for love now-a-days without a good deal of pin money, new dresses, cetera, is a very uncertain—p'r'aps an altogether unknown quantity. It's so hard to say. But the poor little girl was full of faith, hope, and charity. 'He'll soon get an increase in salary,' she arg'ed. 'Increases come slow in the civil service,' says the pilot who had her weather eye wide open. 'Wal,' says Maud, 'Mr. Suckaveck may be nice and all that, but he is too slow.' 'He'll propose by and by,' says Mrs. Bibblebeau, 'some time before the session is over—and just think on the honour of marryin' a member of parliament! Here he comes,' she says. 'Sh-h-h!' So, into the pit came Suckaveck from Dingleddale.

"Wal—he must have turrible winnin' ways, I say, not to distract such a purty girl as Miss Ketcheman, for he's homelier than a live goose without feathers. I wonder where the poor fellow got the quare name. Suckaveck, Suckaveck, Suckaveck! If he was born in Cape Breton, I's'd say that he was called after one of the young calves of that part of the coun-

try, for it's a common occurrence at Big Frog Pond, at daybreak of a summer's morning, to see an old woman out in the calve-pasture, with a bucket of milk for the calves, callin' at the pinnacle of her voice, 'Co' suck-a-veck! Co' suck-a-veck! Co'!' But that is make no difference. When he reached his pew he looked up into the gallery, and seein' those who were conspirin' for an alliance with his bank account, he raised his hat off his bald head only far enough to be polite, but not far enough to reveal the spot. 'Now's your time,' says the poor misguided society-pilot, and the poor foolish girl must have throw'd a kiss down at him, for he looked cheaper than a Plymouth Rock hen sendin' in her resignation at the end of the layin'-egg season. 'Hit,' says a sassy member in one of the back pews. 'Out on first,' says Mr. John Hector Baseball, M. P.

"Wal—lots of the members heared, and others know'd, that they was tryin' to make a match between the two, so they began laughin'. The reporters caught on and began laughin', too; fact of it is, they was more or less laughin' all around the circle. All this merri-ment was sufficiently subdued, however, to one black-guard in one of the back pews bawls out, 'Cupid's in the gallery,' and the whole pit looked me square in the face, and then bu'sted out laughin'. I got so excited that I began scratchin' my bald head. This made them worse, some of them actually fallin' out of the pews laughin'. Fact, uverybody was laughin' but Mr. Speaker, and that poor duvil was as serious-

lookin' as a coffin-plate. 'Cupid's in the gallery,' says the same blackguard once again—and they was another roar, uvery one lookin' at me. Wal—that was too much. I can stand bein' called almost anything, but I got my back up higher than a kite when I was called Cupid, whatever that means. So I put on my sou'wester and made a bee-line for the door, walkin' all over the pews. Wal—you nuver heared such laughin' and cheerin', so that by the time I got to the entrance, I was mad enough to bu'st. But I didn't. 'To the bottomless pits with the whole shootin'-match,' I says to the doorkeeper, 'with the whole outfit—House, pit, gallery, and committee of the old and well-know'd hole,' I says, and I skin'd out immediately."

"More steam, Captain!" cried Senator Diddelum, and another round of Scotch followed.

They then left that far-famed bar—left the building altogether, in fact, and together walked down Parliament Hill.

This eminence rises almost perpendicularly to the height of one hundred feet above the Ottawa River, and midway between its crest and the river is Lover's Walk, which winds around the side of the hill, being hidden from view both from the hill above and the river below by beautiful trees. It was down this far-famed promenade that Senator Diddelum and the old smuggler came.

"Look!" cried the Wag of the Hill, pointing to a happy couple occupying one of those seats which had been placed here and there along the walk for the con-

venience of young, old, and middle-aged lovers who were wont to promenade there.

"That's Miss Ketcheman," Captain Roderick declared.

"And she's with Robert Ford of the Census Department," added Senator Diddelum, who said nothing more until they came opposite the rustic seat where Maud and Robert were quietly cooing to each other, utterly oblivious of what was going on in the outside world.

"Good-evening, Maud—and Robert."

"Good-evening, Senator," they both said together.

They were not the least embarrassed, for they had that old tell-tale love-light in their eyes.

"Wal—sissy," said Captain Roderick, addressing Maud, "that's the boy for you. Don't you mind what any society-pilot 'll say. As for poor Bill Suck-aveck—he's homelier than a pile of old scrap-iron."

This hurt the feelings of the poor little girl who was being so dexterously manoeuvred to capture a member of parliament, but the kind-hearted old senator took the sting out of the old sea-dog's very good advice by adding:

"The man that's fortunate enough to win Maud's hand is to be envied."

"Isn't he a dear old soul, Robert?" said Maud, after they had passed along.

It was not difficult to tell who was meant, for she could mean no other than Hon. Simon Bartholomew

Diddelum, the genial and kindly Wag of Parliament Hill.

"Wal—Diddelum," said Captain Roderick, "but it's you fellows that have the good times in the Senate—doin' nothing."

"Doing nothing, Captain! Why, the Senate has to perform the very important function of checking and amending the hasty legislation of the House of Commons. The senators, Captain, are the real friends of the people."

"Wal," the old smuggler declared, "that's news. I was always thinkin' the Canadian Senate was a sort of political paradise for broken-down politicians who had nothing to do but sit down and draw their pay with faces as long as the old and well-know'd rays of the settin' sun."

This greatly amused the old senator with whom Captain Roderick regretfully parted a little later on, the old sea-dog returning to the North Pole Hotel by way of Lover's Walk, where gaily dressed girls promenaded backwards and forwards, hanging lovingly on the arms of admiring men, young and old, handsome and otherwise, some of them senators, and members, and civil servants, from that far-famed Hill above.

CHAPTER XLV.

"PROWLIN' AROUND."

"WELL, Captain Roderick, how did you spend the afternoon?" asked Mr. Thomas Savon at the tea-table that evening.

"Wal," answered the old smuggler, "I did some prowlin' around the House of Commons and Parliament Hill to I met Senator Diddelum who is one the finest men in the whole country. We had some drinks of Scotch together, then we went for a stroll down Lover's Walk. It's well named, I say, for I nuver see'd such flirtin' sence I first see'd the light of day. It was truly a sight of a lifetime—one of the seven wonders of the world! They was purty girls with handsome fellows, young fellows with old girls, and young girls with old fellows, and members of parliament, and senators, and civil servants, and society-pilots—uvery one with a kind of pop in their eyes—a pop peculiar to the narrow windin' pathway that goes around that well-know'd Hill—a real, genuine, pop-the-question kind of pop that you's'll see nowhere else in the world but there itself. They tells me it is considered good form to frequent that well-know'd place under the protection of a chaperon or society-

pilot, so it's no wonder that nearly uvery eligible in the city is either married or engaged. I'm not at all surprised at this, with such a public temptation as Lover's Walk which I almost took to be a pigeon-ranch so much cooin' of lovers was goin' on, while the birds was singin' in the leafy maple trees, and the members and senators was sassin' and hollerin' and cheerin' in the House on the Hill, and the poor misfortunate lumber-jacks was swearin' on the river below. It's dangerous to go on that well-know'd promenade at all, for I went next thing to proposin' to Hon. Simon Bartholomew Diddelum—proposin', howuver, that we go back to the bar of the Senate for another round of drinks. So, if you's want to get a wife, Savon, take the girl you's love around that windin' pathway with her society-pilot followin' a couple of feet in the rear. Propose to her, and she can't refuse. But look out you's doesn't propose to the pilot, for that uver-watchful person, especially if she is a widow, might take advantage of her unsuspectin' protégée, and cut her out. Look out, therefore; look out, I say again. They should be danger-signals smeared all over that place, for I am thinkin' if an old maple tree 'd muster up enough courage to propose to a girl goin' around that wonderful promenade, it'd get her what-
 uver!"

And there was a laugh all round.

Supper over, Captain Roderick and Mr. Savon adjourned to meet, two hours later, at the bar, where they remained until midnight. The old smuggler was

then piloted by the hotel boot-black to a small room somewhere in the attic. But he did not sleep well. He was up early the following morning, however, and after having an early breakfast, went up to the hotel clerk and asked for his bill.

"What was the number of your room?" asked the clerk with a disdainful smile.

"They was no number on it."

"Well, where did you sleep?"

"If you's have a minute to spare," answered the old smuggler, "I's'll tell you's where I didn't sleep. It was up in that temporary paradise know'd as the attic, and was about eight by ten—no carpet, no furniture, no nothing, but a small little bed, and a tin pan full of water on a kind of old table, and a coarse towel, and a cake of hard soap used for washin' such things as floors, cetera. It looked out on the back yards of several houses, and on the tops of ash-barrels, line-fences, hen-coops, dog-kennels, women sassin' each other over fences, men swearin' on the top of wood-piles, hens crowin' and cacklin' in the coops, and dogs barkin' and howlin' in the kennels. It was next door to the one occupied by the First Regiment of Kitchen Light Infantry, who was growlin' to each other all night; fact, it was right under the Cat Promenade where one cat kept struttin' about throwin' sass down at another cat, with a hump on its back, that was paradin' around the top of the houses below."

"Two dollars and a half, please," demanded the indignant clerk.

“Two dollars and a half!” repeated the surprised guest.

“Remember this is a two-and-a-half house,” said the clerk coolly.

“Remember you’s only gave me fifty cents worth of accommodations,” replied the old smuggler. “But here’s your money,” he added, “your fifty cents, with two dollars throw’d in for you to buy a coil of rope, although I know you’s hasn’t got even enough decency to go and hang yourself.”

“Get out of the house,” shouted the enraged clerk.

“I’s’ll go when I’m ready,” answered the old sea-dog, who at once left for the railway station to look for a freight-train going west.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE STING OF THE VIPER.

HAVING utterly failed in his final examinations in medicine, Fred Bludgeon sank lower and lower. He drank almost continually, and was a disgrace to both relations and friends. Again and again did his father threaten to turn him out on the street if he did not reform. Threats were now useless. He had gone too far—had sunk too low.

“Just let father turn me out,” he would say, “and I shall make him regret it the longest day he lives.”

The time did come, however, when Mr. Bludgeon could no longer put up with a son who not only threatened to beat his own mother but who actually tried to carry out his threat. It happened late at night. Mrs. Bludgeon was sitting in the parlour at the time, and Fred was drunk. That was no excuse, nor did it save him from his father who promptly threw him out in the street.

The end soon came. Homeless, penniless, characterless, friendless, he needed money to buy liquor—to satisfy his craving for drink, drink, drink. He

forged a cheque for a large amount, and his mother and father being absent from the city at the time, were unable to come to his rescue.

He was arrested—committed for trial, and the evidence against him was so clear and overwhelmingly strong that his lawyer advised him to plead guilty; and guilty he did plead, before His Honour Henry Hillsdale, County Court Judge for the Metropolitan District of Halifax, who gave him five years in St. Jean Penitentiary.

Considering his insolence to the judge, his sentence was light. He received it with the coolest indifference. He rejoiced to think how his conviction and disgrace would wound his father's pride, for he was absolutely without affection or kindly feeling—an ungrateful wretch, a pessimist, a cynic, a hater of mankind!

Strange to say, he occupied, while in jail, the same cell in which Alex had spent so many weary days and nights.

"Well," he said to himself, when he became aware of the fact, "my downfall dates from the night I introduced Alex to Flora Stuart. I put a fair share of suffering his way," he added, with a satanic smile. "But he shall suffer a little more—just a little more—at my hands! Where is he? Now, let me see. He went West. Oh, I wish I only knew his address! What am I thinking about? He hailed from Little Village, Cape Breton. I shall write him to that address, his people will forward the letter to him,

wherever he is, and if he really loved Flora Stuart, as I believe he did, he'll suffer a little yet on my account. I shall have one more thrust at him—a home thrust, a heart thrust, a thrust that will draw blood.”

Taking a small tablet and fountain pen from his pocket, he then wrote the following letter :

“ HALIFAX, N. S.,

OCT. —, —.

“ MY DEAR ALEX,

You have cut yourself off completely from old Halifax where you were pretty badly used. You had one true friend, however, in Flora Stuart. Poor Flora! She was a lovely girl. Besides, as you no doubt know, she loved you, Alex, and was an exile from home on account of her love for you. Yes, her father drove her from home the very day of the trial, because she had dared to call to see you at your cell after the trial was over. Kathleen Salford, an old classmate of hers, offered her a refuge, and she taught music and singing for a living. Why, the very evening after you parted with her she was to have sung at a patriotic concert here. But certain snobs insisted that her name be struck off the programme, and old Raleigh had to yield to their wishes. You can imagine how this hurt the poor girl's feelings. That very night, too, she took sick, and next day she was carried home to Thistledown in a sort of a comatose state. Her parents were broken-hearted, and her father could not

forgive himself for his cruelty in turning her away from home. They took her to the country, thinking that the change would do her good. She got lonesome, poor little girl, and they had to bring her back again. She was broken-hearted, and, oh, how changed, for she never sang again! She died last Tuesday, and during her conscious hours—almost till her latest breath—your name was on her lips. She forgave everybody for the way they wronged you, and for the way they treated her; and when she was dying her mind wandered, for it was weak. She seemed to see you in a vision. ‘I am going far, far away,’ I was told she said, ‘over mountain, and river, and plain, for there’s some one waiting for me beyond where the glorious sun sets at eventide. Oh, Alex! Is this you coming, coming, coming to meet me—coming from that far-away land. Ah, welcome, welcome, welcome! I did not forsake you. I will not forsake you. Come, come, come! Come, yes, come and take me with you to that golden land beyond—where all is brightness, all is happiness, all is light. Take me, take me, take me! A cold chill seizes me. But it is only Death who is smiling as he beckons. Take me, then, take me. Oh, take me with you! Ah, farewell beautiful world, in which there is too much sorrow—farewell! Farewell, ye things of earth, which are not divine enough for me. Then take me, O loved one! Take me, thou who art kind and true! Take me, Alex. Take me—take me—take me—with you—home.’ A tear or two from those lovely dark-blue

eyes we were wont to admire so; a sigh—and all was over! Her parents were crushed with grief, but their troubles did not come alone. Mr. Stuart lost all his money in speculation, and they are now very poor—living in a small cottage, on the charity of friends. They will end their days in the city poor-house. Flora loved you to the last. All the people now speak well of you. I hope you are getting along well, and trust that you will write soon to your old classmate,

“FRED BLUDGEON.”

“Well,” he said, after he had finished, “that sounds kind of pathetic. It even sounds friendly, but the sting of the viper is there, I think. Ah, I have suffered! Let him suffer now, if he ever loved the girl.”

The very next morning he left the city on the Maritime Express, in charge of the usual officer of the law. About noon they arrived at St. Jean Station.

His reception at the penitentiary was delightfully novel, although it proved a somewhat trying ordeal. His hair was clipped short, his dimensions were taken—he was weighed, photographed, assigned a cell and compelled to don the striped uniform of the convict. Everything was, indeed, delightfully novel! He was not even forced to rest after his somewhat tiresome trip, but spent that very afternoon pounding stone in the yard—the first manual labour he ever performed in his life. The novelty soon wore off, and he resolved to make a dash for liberty. He therefore watched his chance, and at dusk that evening was

seen trying to scale the high fence which enclosed the yard.

"Halt!" cried the guard on duty.

Fred paid no attention, for he was within a few feet of the top.

"Halt!" again cried the guard. "Halt, or I'll fire!"

Fred had just reached the top. Another moment and he would be over. He was too late. The guard quickly raised his Winchester, took aim, and fired with deadly accuracy; and Fred, groaning piteously, fell heavily to the ground, inside the high board fence—shot in the thigh, and bleeding freely. He was at once carried into the hospital, and the bullet was removed. But the poor convict's life was despaired of.

"You poor, foolish boy," said the kind-hearted though tactless surgeon, after he had done all he could for his patient. "You are destined to die a lingering death."

Fred said nothing, but groaned piteously. Justice had, indeed, overtaken him. It came perhaps a little slow of foot, but it came as surely as it was slow in coming.

CHAPTER XLVII.

IN THE HEART OF THE CANADIAN ROCKIES.

As soon as Alex got back to Cow Creek he threw up his position and left for Prince Albert where he met Captain Roderick who had sent a messenger out to the ranch after him.

"Let's go further west, sonny," the old sea-dog suggested.

"All right," Alex agreed—and they at once began a journey westward into British Columbia.

Arriving at Fernie, a prosperous town in the heart of the Canadian Rockies, about the end of October, they purchased a generous supply of food, a couple of pairs of blankets, a prospecting outfit and a tent, and at once set out for the mountains expecting to make their fortune.

Four weeks passed away, and during that time these novices had traversed wide-mouthed canyons, traced large brooks to their trickling sources, climbed peaks to their snow-capped summits—without success. Still they persevered. They were not the least discouraged. Nor did they think of returning until their supplies began to run out.

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When they tried to get back by the way they had come, they found that it was impossible to do so, owing to the ice that had formed during a rain-storm, after their ascent. They then decided to cross the mountain and make an effort to descend on the opposite side, their decision proving to be a wise one, for on that side there was what seemed to be a pathway, leading down the steep declivity which was almost entirely free from ice. Down, down, down, they came—Captain Roderick ahead, Alex following closely in the rear. As they descended, the pathway grew narrower, steeper, rougher; in fact, it became plain that there was no real pathway at all; and although the old smuggler was exercising the greatest care, he missed his footing and fell, landing on a ledge of rock over twenty feet below.

“Great heavens!” cried Alex. “Are you hurt, Captain?”

“Wal,” answered the old smuggler, “I think I did get shaken up considerable.”

The poor old man was not only very much shaken up but had one of his ankles badly sprained; in fact, when Alex got him back up again, he was almost perfectly helpless, so that about the only thing left for Alex to do was to carry him back to Fernie, or he would surely perish if left alone in the mountains until Alex should return with help.

Alex was equal to the occasion. He carefully bandaged the old sea-dog's ankle, then tied him on his back, and proceeded slowly down the mountain side.

The so-called pathway, at best narrow, rugged, and dangerous, now wound around the steep side of a treacherous cliff which rose perpendicularly above a yawning gulf over six hundred feet deep. It was necessary for Alex to proceed with extreme caution. One false step, one slip, one moment of fear, perhaps, and both he and his quaint old friend would be dashed to pieces on the sharp rocks that stood out ready to receive them hundreds of feet below.

It was perhaps the most trying time of Alex's whole life, but he had a duty to perform—that of carrying his old friend in safety back to Fernie—and it was a duty he was bound to accomplish. The difficulties in the way were almost insurmountable, but he was dogged in his determination to succeed. It was one thing or another with him—success or Death—Death, far over the treeless waste of prairie—beyond the snow-capped mountains—Death, calling, calling, calling!

Soon it seemed as if his time had come, for after going half way around the cliff he came to a place where the rock which formed the pathway had all broken away, the gap thus made being five feet wide and hundreds of feet deep. There was no perceptible way of crossing it, so what was he to do? It was no use for him to turn back, for he could never carry Captain Roderick up over the mountain: in fact, the pathway was so narrow at this point that it would be difficult for him even to turn.

One may easily imagine the feelings that filled his

breast as he looked above him to see if there was anything to which he could cling until he was safely over the gap. There was nothing except bare rock above, bare rock below, bare rock everywhere about him.

The sun had already begun its descent in the western sky, and its golden rays were reflected by one bright bit of metal in the rock immediately above the awful gap. This reflection attracted Alex, who, reaching out cautiously above him, got hold of the piece of rock in which this bright bit of metal shone. He loosened it, and it fell, striking fully six hundred feet below, where several mountain eagles were slowly sailing backward and forward as if waiting until he should tumble over the cliff; and after seeing it strike and break into a score of pieces, he again looked up, and lo! the whole space which he had bared by loosening the piece of rock, shone with golden lustre.

A thrill of triumph passed over him, for, on examining this space closely, he found unmistakable indications of a rich seam of gold ore. He felt that he had succeeded, but remembering the duty he owed to his old friend, decided to hasten down the mountain. Yet how was he to cross the gap? How, indeed! The mountain eagles below were screaming as if in anticipation of a meal of human flesh, and the giant pines farther down were slowly shaking their heads as if they were trying to tell him of the imminent danger he was in. Even the south wind turned prophet and sent up its solemn warning as it swept along the timber belt far below. Was it Death, then,—Death,

beyond the snow-capped mountains—Death, calling, calling, calling?

“Turn back, Alex!” the harsh voice of self-preservation was urging. “Turn back. Let the old outlaw go! Let him fall, if he will, but save yourself.”

“Not so,” replied the gentle voice of sacrifice. “Remember your old friend. Outlaw he may be, but he’s your friend! Be a hero in death rather than a coward in life. Remember your duty!”

“Think of your discovery,” said the voice of avarice, “of your gold. Youth, wealth—why, the whole world is yours if you only drop your worthless burden.”

“Then will come remorse,” said the voice of sacrifice, “you——”

“Look at those sharp rocks hundreds of feet below,” interrupted the voice of self-preservation, “and those eagles which will soon devour you.”

“Duty!” said the voice of sacrifice.

“Death!” hissed the other in reply.

Alex began to feel dizzy and faint.

“Five feet across!” he said to himself. “Duty, death, gold! Duty, duty, duty,” he then repeated, “duty, duty, duty! Success or Death!”

“Death,” an awakened memory seemed to whisper, “Death, far over the treeless waste of prairie—beyond the snow-capped mountains—Death, calling, calling, calling!”

“Death, then,” he said aloud.

Nothing could daunt him now, for he had re-

solved to jump to the other side. First, he planted his left foot firmly on one side of the gap and braced himself up for the supreme effort. He fully realized the peril of his undertaking, for if he failed, both he and the old smuggler would be dashed to pieces on the sharp rocks that awaited them hundreds of feet below. He was not the least afraid. He leaped across, gained the other side, but he stumbled and fell on his hands and knees, and as there was nothing for him to hold on to, he began to slip back.

Now came the time when it seemed as if he **must** either let Captain Roderick go or both would be carried over the cliff. This he would not do, even to save his own life, and seeing a little chink in a rock ahead of him, he thought if he could only get his hands into it, he might be able to drag himself out of the perilous position in which he was placed. It seemed almost beyond his reach. He made one supreme effort, however, and, getting his hands into this narrow aperture, succeeded in dragging himself from the edge of the gap. Pale as death, yet cool and collected, he then crawled along the so-called pathway until it got a little wider; then, standing up, he proceeded slowly, making sure of every step, until he was safely around the treacherous cliff, when, with a sigh of relief, he unburdened himself and rested.

Captain Roderick was feverish and dull, and did not seem to know that anything had happened out of the ordinary. He was only conscious of having fallen, and of severe pain in one of his legs; and as they had

no water with them, he suffered from thirst, the day being both dry and warm.

"Wal—sonny," he said at length, "I wish I had a drink," which was sufficient for Alex who resumed his burden and proceeded down the mountain side in quest of water.

The sun was now setting beyond a range of snow-capped mountains, and the whole landscape was bathed with floods of lustrous gold. Canyon, and river, and snow-capped peak—each had a place in that picture of rugged loveliness. Yet the weary old sun would not wait. It sank lower and lower, as the long shadows lengthened, until it disappeared behind the distant range. Night came on apace after a brief twilight, and an inky darkness overtook Alex as he trudged along with his heavy burden, in a brave attempt to reach shelter that night. He did reach shelter, but not the shelter he sought, for he lost his way in the darkness, and was so jaded that he had to stop for the night in an open forest of pines—gigantic, waving pines, too, such as only grow on the lower slopes of the mountains. It was rather a pleasant place, though, for near by was a crystal rill whose plaintive murmurings lulled the weary wanderers to rest as it made its lonely way to the brook that flowed beyond.

Captain Roderick spent a somewhat restless night, for besides suffering from his injuries, he suffered much from hunger and cold. Alex suffered, too, but

at daybreak next morning he resumed his burden—and his journey towards Fernie.

The day was sultry, yet Alex trudged on. His progress was slow—so slow that it was not until late in the evening that, worn out with hunger and fatigue, he succeeded in reaching his destination. Captain Roderick was then handed over to Dr. Glenoch at the Fernie Hospital, where his injuries received every attention. At the end of a week he was able to move around almost as well as ever, but not feeling sufficiently strong to go back to the mountains, he decided to return to Big Frog Pond, for monotonous prairie and mountain wilds had ceased to have any attraction for him.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE OLD SEA-DOG SEES THE WINDY CITY.

"HERE'S a present for you, sonny," said the old sea-dog, putting a fifty-dollar note into Alex's hand as they parted at Fernie Station one morning about the first of December.

Of course Alex protested, but it was no use.

The day's delay at Chicago on the way home, suited the old smuggler perfectly, for it gave him an opportunity of seeing some of the city; and he did see all he considered worth seeing, having visited Sausage, Bacon & Company's far-famed packing-house, and Montgomery Ward & Company's magnificent departmental store. Then, after buying a couple of flasks of Scotch whiskey, he made his way to Dearborn Station to await the departure of the train which was to leave that night at eleven o'clock.

"Say, mister, come here," said a long, lanky, raw-boned, pale-faced, middle-aged man to the old smuggler when the latter entered the waiting-room.

"Wal—what's bitin' you's?" Captain Roderick demanded.

"I'm in hard luck. I'm broke—dead broke! I came in here this morning, but I couldn't get work, so

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I had nothing to eat. Will you give a fellow a quarter to get something to eat?"

"Does you's know Sausage, Bacon & Company's packin'-house at the Union Stock Yards?"

"Yes, mister, but where's the quarter?"

"Wal—I was there to-day," the old sea-dog went on, totally ignoring the question of finances, "and I was duvilish well used. 'Whose place is this?' I says, goin' up to the main entrance. 'This is Sausage, Bacon's,' says an awful polite little nigger, who was stationed at the door. 'Is th' old man around—old Bacon, I mean?' I says. The coon's eyes laughed—he was too polite to laugh with his mouth. 'Wal,' I says, 'would you's kill a poor old duvil for wantin' to go through?' 'Why, no,' he says, 'it's a pleasure to show visitors through the house.' So he got a free ticket and a messenger to show me the sights. The first sight I was showed, then, was the pig-murderin' apparatus, which beats the Niagara Falls all hollow, for the pigs was pourin' into one end of the buildin' to breathe their last at the rate of fifteen thousand a day! Fifteen thousand hogs a day was the pace the old packin'-house was trottin' at, for as soon as the pigs reached that palace of doom, they flew around on a big wheel; then, on to a steel pole where they was bled; then, into a bath-tub where they was washed; then, into a shavery where they was shaved. The mortality was turrible—they was nothing but a streak of white. But they was one black-and-white pig in the bunch, so I decided to watch it; and only two

minutes elapsed from the time it was gruntin' in the yards to it was scattered all over the house—to its hams was smokin' in the smokery on One Thousandth Street East, and to its bacon was bakin' in the bakery on One Thousandth Street West. You nuver see'd such hustlin'. They are sayin' the men won't talk loud or the girls won't gossip in that great palace of doom for fear of sp'ilin' the flavour of the pork, and of the ham, and of the bacon. I rather think, though, that they are more afraid of gettin' fired for sp'ilin' the flavour of the dividend sheets by wastin' time. It's a dangerous place to work in, I say, for I nearly died of satisfaction from seein' the stubbornness gettin' took out of the pigs."

"Say, mister, I'm starving," said the stranger.

"But that is make no difference," replied the old smuggler. "I was often starvin' myself. But I had one good feast to-day from the top of Montgomery Ward's well-know'd store—a feast on the drawbacks and possibilities of Chicargo. 'Are you's busy?' I says to a policeman that was beatin' up and down Michigan Avenue. 'Yes,' he says. He was busy, too, when I came up—whistlin' *Over the Hills and Far Away* to police-court variations. But that ain't neither here nor there. 'What's that shinin' off there?' I says, pointin' towards the lake. 'That,' he says, 'is a golden man.' 'A golden man,' I says. 'Yes,' he says. 'Wal,' I says, 'that's quare. I often heard of a golden calf,' I says, 'but I nuver heard of a golden man before.' 'Wal,' he says, 'that's the

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Statue of Progress. It's not solid gold,' he says; 'it's only gilded, but it's the weather-vane of the Windy City.' 'Wal—good-bye,' I says, 'and thank you for the information.' I then made a bee-line for Montgomery Ward's store. 'May I go up to the top?' I says to one of the clerks. 'Certainly,' he says, so I took one elevator, an another, and still another, up ten, twenty, twenty-five stories, to I was right under the golden man—three hundred and ninety-four feet above the street: and as I beheld the great buildings round about me, I thought of the rich, and of the comforts and conveniences of this great modern city. I also thought of its wretchedness and of the poor duvils from the country who ought to have stayed at home instead of coming here to go to pieces. There was evidence of lots of comfort all right, but they was also evidence of misery plus two. But it wasn't my funeral, so I just feasted my hungry eyes on the beauty and ugliness of your Windy City."

"Well," said the bored stranger, "I'd like to be feasting my hungry insides on something to eat."

"Something to drink, you mean, perhaps," Captain Roderick suggested, pulling a flask of Scotch whiskey out of his pocket.

"You are right!" cried the delighted stranger.

And before the old smuggler left for Halifax, where he expected to join Foxy Donald, now in charge of the *Rob Roy*, he presented the drouthy personage he had so greatly bored with the much coveted whiskey.

CHAPTER XLIX.

UP IN DREAMLAND.

AFTER Captain Roderick had gone, Alex purchased a supply of provisions and went back to the mountains alone, to search for the pathway by which they had descended a little over a week before.

The undertaking proved lonely and fruitless. For three weeks he roamed about looking for that pathway without avail. He was much discouraged at his apparent failure, for he felt that he had made a valuable discovery—that there was a rich seam of gold ore at that awful place where he almost lost his life. His search proved fruitless—all his efforts were in vain. He could not find his way back to The Gap—and when his provisions gave out, it was with a heavy heart that he trudged back to Fernie, on the morning of the twenty-fourth of December.

Everybody was in Christmas humor—in good cheer. Alex was possibly the only exception. But he was a failure—an absolute failure—for all his work, struggles, sacrifices, seemed to have been useless. Somehow or another he was not to blame. He did his best. But he failed. He was a failure. That was about all one could say.

He was lonely, too, for Christmas is peculiarly a home time, and pleasant memories of other Christmases haunted him—of the many happy Christmases he had spent at Little Village with his parents who always looked forward with such keen pleasure to his home-coming from college. It made him sick at heart to think of it.

After dinner, he shaved, dressed himself in his best clothes, and tried to be cheerful; and he might possibly have succeeded if he did not go to the post-office with the expectation of getting a letter either from Captain Roderick or from home. He was disappointed. There was a letter for him—not the one he expected, but another—one in familiar handwriting with a Halifax postmark three or four months old—a letter which appeared to have been first addressed to Little Village, whence it was sent to Fernie. Ah, if Fred Bludgeon had the selecting of a time when his letter would have caused most pain, he could not have improved on the very minute Alex read his letter announcing Flora Stuart's death!

"Poor little girl!" was all the broken-hearted failure said—and he went back to his cold, cheerless room at the hotel.

His robust health had been considerably shattered of late, and his physical strength was very much reduced on account of so much exposure to hardship and cold.

"I think I'll lie down and rest," he said to himself, after closing the door of his room. "Perhaps I may feel better."

He slept all the afternoon, waking up about six o'clock with a severe chill which lasted nearly half an hour. An acute, agonizing pain in the left side, soon developed, and breathing became more rapid.

Alex knew only too well what was wrong, and putting on his overcoat and hat, went out to seek admission to the Fernie Hospital.

On the way thither he called on Dr. Glenoch, who was considerably alarmed at his condition.

"Who are you—and where are you from, my dear young man?" was one of his first questions, for he was surprised that an ordinary prospector should be so well versed in matters pertaining to the practice of medicine.

"I'm a doctor that failed," Alex answered.

"And you so young—so very young!" said the big-hearted Glenoch sympathetically. "Come with me."

They then drove to the hospital where Alex was at once admitted as a patient.

"Pneumonia with complications," was written on the chart beside his bed.

"Be very good to him, Miss Mitchell," were Dr. Glenoch's parting words to Alex's sweet-faced young nurse.

"Indeed I will, Doctor."

The doctor laughed.

"Telephone for me if there is any change in his condition. Merry Christmas, Miss Mitchell!"

"I wish you the same, Doctor, and many happy re-

turns," said the beautiful girl—and the big-hearted doctor left for his office.

He returned to the hospital about ten o'clock, just as a very marked change for the worse began in Alex, who became so violently delirious that he had to be changed to a private ward and tied in bed.

"Poor fellow!" said Glenoch. "He seems to have already drunk deeply of the bitterness of life."

"I don't think I ever saw a sadder face," said Miss Mitchell.

Had she seen Fred Bludgeon's letter, she would have known the cause.

Towards morning, her new patient slept, and the silvery rays of the moon, now slowly sinking in the western sky, poured in through the window on that self-confessed failure, who was no longer lonely and broken-hearted but glad and happy. His pale, thin face beamed with radiance, and his thoughts were far, far away. He did not dream of hardship, privation, suffering, failure: he dreamt of summer, of sunshine, and of gold-lit sea.

Once again he was a happy boy at his old home in Little Village. His old playmates were all there—just as he had known them in his boyhood days. The evening sun was setting as he wandered down to the sea-shore—setting at the far edge of the restful Gulf, as he had so often seen it set before. The sea-gull in its nest at the top of the steep bank above him softly crooned to its young ones, as the sun was sinking, sinking, sinking, to its place of rest. Leading over

the much-loved Gulf was the old, old golden pathway which narrowed, narrowed, narrowed, as the sun sank lower and lower, vanishing at length as the last pencil of golden light from the west shot across the gold-lit sea.

The full moon then arose and shone from a cloudless eastern sky as he wandered from the shore to the lonely wood on the hill behind his old home—to that wood which was now so full of life, of gladness, and of song. He followed a flower-strewn pathway that led through it, until he came to a golden stairway which seemed to join hill and sky. Up, up, up, he climbed, on those golden steps, dazed by the splendour about him, until he was constrained by positive fatigue to stop midway between hill and sky.

“Come,” he heard a soft, sweet voice calling. “Come away—home. I have come a long, long way to meet you.”

Alex looked up. He could see no one, for a cloud hid the top of the golden stairway. Still he went up, up, up, for some strange fascination—some mysterious, irresistible, alluring influence—attracted, compelled him to go up; and up, up, up, he did go, until he saw a great jewelled door at the top softly opened by an unseen hand. He then stopped and closed his eyes, for the light that shone forth was blinding in its brightness.

“Come,” said the same sweet voice. “I did not forsake you. I will not forsake you. Come with me—home.”

Alex again looked up, and lo! he saw a lovely maiden with snow-white raiment—a maiden whose faultless face shone like the setting sun.

“Come,” she said, extending her hand to welcome him.

Alex knew the voice, he knew the angel face, he knew the lovely maiden. It was Flora—Flora Stuart who had gone before him—gone so very far away, too.

“I knew you would be true,” he said tenderly. “I knew we should meet again in this happy land, and I was not mistaken.”

“Come, then,” she said softly. “Come away—home.”

He tried to grasp her snow-white hand, but he could not, for the vision vanished. The moon had already sunk behind the snow-capped mountains; the lamp was dimly burning in its place on the wall; and when he awoke, his nurse smiled sweetly as he looked up into her lovely, kind face, for she knew that he was better—that his delirium was gone.

CHAPTER L.

"UVERYBODY BOO-ED."

AT Halifax Captain Roderick met Foxy Donald; they at once set sail for Big Frog Pond in the *Rob Roy*, and after the old schooner was stripped for the winter, her restless owner at once went to Sydney, where he spent a couple of months speculating in stocks.

On his return to Big Frog Pond, about the middle of February, he found his old friend Malcolm Allan Sandy ahead of him.

"Cape Breton's gone mad, Malcolm," he said.

"How's that, Captain?" asked the kind-hearted old fisherman.

"Mad over stocks," the old sea-dog explained. "When I went down to Sydney, a couple of months ago, you's'd hear nothing but stocks, stocks, stocks; nothing on the street, nothing in the shops, nothing on the cars but stocks, stocks, stocks—Dominion Coal Common, Dominion Steel Preferred, and Bonds, cetera, cetera, cetera. Why, the very air you breathed was infested with stock-market slang as with a plague. Uverybody was boo-in', for the whole city was full of little bulls, each tryin' to boost his favour-

ite stock, all boostin' Sydney. The janitor of the Murphy Block boo-ed; old man Burkinshaw's widow boo-ed; the purty stenographer in Lawyer Dudley's office boo-ed; the office-boy at Bludgeon's boo-ed; the bartender at the Labrador House boo-ed; old Brudder Jones, Deacon to the Coke Ovens, boo-ed; the kids on the street boo-ed; fact, uverybody was boo-in'. The stocks kept goin' up, and the boo-in' increased to at last it was louder than the very thunders of heaven. Firemen would throw the last shovelful of coal on their fires with a boo; clerks would register uvery sale with a boo; church-goers would drop their coppers into the collection-plates on Sundays with a boo; and at the hotels—it was boo, boo, boo, all day long. Do you know, Malcolm, I almost started in boo-in' myself. I could almost feel a pair of horns sprout-in' on my forehead, and I was like a two-year-old after smellin' blood. I was mad—crazy mad with stocks, stocks, stocks. I went down to the Federal Bank where I had four thousand dollars on deposit—and would you believe me? The teller was boo-in'; the ledger-keeper was boo-in'; and heaven bless you, if the manager himself wasn't boo-in'! 'There's a fortune in stocks,' uvery one was sayin'. 'Invest on a ten-point margin, and if the stocks go up ten points you double your money.' I at once transferred all my cash from savings-bank account to current account, and got a cheque book. And, 'pon my soul, Malcolm, when I left that bank I had to hold my hand over my mouth or I'd be boo-in', too.

"I then ran into the *Daily Mail* printin'-office, and there was nothing there but boo, boo, boo! The editor was boo-in'—boo-in' loud, too. 'Sydney will soon be a second Pittsburg,' he says, 'with a population of three or four hundred thousand, and on this very harbour will be launched a navy that will awe the world!' The reporters were boo-in' in like manner; why, even the printer's duvil boo-ed. My head ached to boo, and I was sick to my stomach. I called to see Dr. Hankson who boo-ed while he diagnosed my case; yes, and boo-ed while he was writin' the perscription. And when I called at the Sydney Drug Store, the druggist himself was boo-in'.

"Wal—by this time I was after gettin' desperate, and instead of takin' the medicine, I broke the bottle on the sidewalk, for I was mortally afraid I'd start in boo-in' myself. I then made a bee-line for the I. C. R. Station to see if I could escape from that awful plague, only to arrive just as a train came in from Halifax loaded with boo-in' passengers. And from all along the track—from the very rails and telegraph wires—came boo, boo, boo! I then took the ferry for North Sydney. There the boo-in', if anything, was worse; and if uver a poor duvil was sorely tempted, it was me. But I didn't utter a boo. They wasn't a boo out of me.

"When I came back to Sydney the first thing I know'd I was on my way to see old Flintcroft, Banker, Broker, Member of the Montreal Stock Exchange. Dominion Steel Common was at 68; Dominion Coal

Common, at 103: old Flintcroft was boo-in'. 'What can I do for you—buh?' he says, for his boo was a little more dignified than what you'd hear on the street. 'I'm only a common man,' I says, 'and I want to buy two hundred shares of Coal Common,' I says, 'at a ten-point margin.' 'All right,' he says, 'two thousand dollars, please.' I gave him my cheque, and I want to say right here that I wasn't in any humour for boo-in' then. I could feel my claws developin', for I seemed to be the only little bear in the bunch. But I kept my own counsel, and kept away from the bulls so that I'd have a clear head to do my own thinkin'.

"Next morning Coal Common opened at 113, and uverybody sold. I sold, too, withdrawin' my profits and investin' two thousand dollars in two hundred shares more of Coal Common. The market was purty active, and Coal Common kept soarin'. I sold at 118, withdrawin' my profits, and bought two hundred shares more of the same material which kept goin' up. The boo-in' was turrible. Why, a man that wouldn't boo in Sydney them days was such an unconventional oddity that he'd almost be arrested for indecency; and I had to keep my ears plugged up with cotton wool to perserve my hearin', if not my very senses. Coal Common kept soarin'. At 123 I again sold, withdrawin' my profits, and buyin' two hundred shares more. I repeated the operation at 128, and at 133, and at 138 I sold out altogether. Uverybody was gettin' dizzy then. The pace was turrible excitin',

for the big bulls were on the home stretch. I had then to my credit in the bank, clear profit, no less than seven thousand dollars. 'Why doesn't you's buy Steel Preferred instead of Coal Common?' some one asked. But I was too busy tryin' to find my bearin's to answer. At 138, I took uvery dollar of profit I had and bought Coal Common. I sold at 143 1-2, and at that point I made a final plunge, investin' uvery cent I had to the world. It was then the boo-in' was turrible. Some were buyin' Steel Common, others Steel Preferred; but I felt that a Coal-Common fire at 143 1-2 was hot enough for me, so I stuck to me Coal to she opened at 149 next morning; then, good-bye, cottontail; good-bye, rabbit! I felt the tide beginning to turn, and I turned bear openly and sold out, comin' out of the game about twenty thousand dollars ahead. And 149 was the highest point Coal Common reached!

"I then turned my attention to sellin' short, and I sold Coal short to it came down to 40, and Steel, to it dropped to 34. The boo-in' was pitiful on the down-grade. It got so low at last that I had to take the wool out of my ears to hear it—and then it wasn't boo-in'; it was more like the bleatin' of lambs half way through the slaughter-house, or the boo-hoo-in' of infants in a nursery. Malcolm, you's'd hardly believe the ruin that followed in its train. Houses were mortgaged, then sold; the savings of years went pop. Margins were soon wiped out when the big Montreal bulls turned bear after unloadin' all their stock on the poor little bulls of Sydney, and North Sydney,

and Glace Bay, and Antigonish, and New Glasgow, and Truro, and Halifax. You won't hear much boo-in' now if you go to Sydney. It all went up in margins. You's'll only hear the doleful wail of those that was bit. It's, 'Good-bye, rabbit; good-bye, cottontail!' now."

"How did you fare off on the whole?" asked Malcolm Allan Sandy.

"I'm in eighty thousand plus the *Lady Eillean*," the old smuggler whispered.

"You don't mean to tell me you own the *Lady Eillean*?"

"I own the *Lady Eillean*, and she goes a 22-knot clip. I bought her for twenty thousand—she's worth twenty-five. Her owner was broke, and she went up in margins on Steel Common. But I'm done with Cape Breton stocks," the old sea-dog added.

"What made you come to that wise decision?"

"A telegram from Fernie—from sonny, who discovered something valuable lately. 'Found The Gap,' he said. 'Wire me three or four thousand.' And I sent him the dough."

CHAPTER LI.

ONE GOOD TURN BEGETS ANOTHER.

AFTER the glad news of the deliverance of the men entombed in the wrecked slope of the Hunting River coal mine had duly found its way all over the continent through the medium of the press, and after the kind telegrams received during convalescence had been answered, Colonel Gordon again directed his attention to the project he had undertaken. The wrecked slope had to be restored—and the work of restoration proved tedious, indeed, as only a few men were able to work at a shift, and nothing could be done along the lines of underground development until the slope had been completely restored. Thus for a few months after the disaster, little substantial progress was made.

Meanwhile the funds in the treasury of the company began to run low, and long before the slope had been restored, they gave out altogether.

The venture at first looked so promising that the men who put their money into it would not sanction the sale of either stock or bonds of the company—at least to the general public. But when the only means of getting coal was cut off by the disaster, in conse-

quence of which the railway remained unused, these same men refused to put any more money into the undertaking; and when stock and bonds were placed on a fairly active market, strange to say, there were scarcely any sales.

"Is that the mine that Colonel Clifford Gordon got caught in?" was the question usually asked, for almost every prospective purchaser had heard of the disaster. And as "Yes" was the only truthful answer that could be given, the proposition was looked upon as unlucky, and only very few were found to buy either bonds or stock—and these only invested, in the aggregate, a few hundred dollars, which was barely enough to cover the cost of advertising.

A meeting of the original investors was then called at Detroit, and nearly all of them were present.

"What's the matter, Colonel?" asked Mr. Barnstead, of Pittsburg, with a sneer which cut Colonel Gordon to the quick. "What's the matter? What explanation have you got to make about the snarl you got us into down there in Cape Breton?"

"We met with a mishap there," the Colonel answered, ignoring the ungentlemanly conduct of his Pittsburg associate, "and if you will bear with me while I give you a full explanation, I shall be obliged."

He then gave an extended account of the disaster, referring at length to the causes of delay in restoring the slope. Whether or not his explanation was satisfactory, the original investors refused to place another dollar at his disposal.

Pay-rolls had to be met, however, and bills had to be paid, and as there were no funds in the treasury, Colonel Gordon had to advance the necessary money out of his own private means. Thus matters stood at the beginning of the new year, when he decided on making an extended trip in search of capital. Montreal, Toronto, Buffalo, Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Albany, Boston, and New York, were visited, but without success.

"It's really too bad," one prominent New York banker remarked to his partner after an interview with Colonel Gordon, "to see a man qualified for almost any position in the United States army, wasting his life trying to float a Cape Breton coal proposition."

"Well," said the partner, "I suppose it's a matter of honour with him now. The men who first invested appear to have suddenly caught cold feet, and he wants to get their money back for them, and is working himself to death to make the thing a success. He's got a rather difficult proposition on his hands, I think. That disaster last September seems to have convinced people that the property is hoodoo-ed, and they simply won't invest."

The January, February, March, and April pay-rolls had to be paid by Colonel Gordon out of his own pocket, and although the slope had been restored and the work of development resumed on a small scale, very little substantial progress was made. The end of June found the affairs of the company in a still

more unsatisfactory condition, for the men, not having been paid for two months, stopped working after giving notice of their intention not only of putting mechanics' liens on the property but of drawing the fires, stopping the pumps, and allowing the slopes to fill with water—if, within two weeks, they did not receive the full amount of their wages.

"Don't do anything rash," was Colonel Gordon's advice to the men. "Don't do anything that would injure the property. Put liens on it if you like, but don't interfere with the pumps. That would not only be dishonourable, it would be criminal. I have met the pay-rolls all winter out of my own pocket, and in fairness to me I want you to do nothing wrong. My sympathy is with you, but I can't help you out before—let me see. To-day is the——"

"The second of July," said one of the men. "When are we going to get our pay?"

"If you will do nothing rash between now and the twentieth, I give you my word of honour that you shall be paid then for the months of May and June, even if I have to mortgage my own private property in order to raise the necessary money. If meanwhile anything should happen me—you know life is uncertain—so that I cannot fulfil my pledge, you will have ten days left for filing liens against the property of the company."

The men were now thoroughly satisfied, for they knew that the Colonel would keep his word. He did keep his word, but not without a great deal of incon-

venience, worry, and hard work. He had succeeded in interesting a coterie of capitalists who withdrew, however, after sending an expert to report on the undertaking. Colonel Gordon had then only a few days left, so that in order to keep faith with the men he had to mortgage his private property.

Meanwhile Alex had not only completely recovered from his illness, but had been successful in finding the lost pathway and the awful gap where he almost lost his life. He staked several claims which he developed during the winter, with money sent from time to time by his old friend and partner, Captain Roderick. Early in May he organized The Gap Gold Company with a nominal capital of a million dollars, divided into shares of one hundred dollars each, and to it he and Captain Roderick transferred all their claims which subsequently proved to be so valuable that when the stock of the new company was put on the market, during the latter part of July, it sold for the almost phenomenal figure of three hundred and eighty-three dollars a share. At that price Alex and Captain Roderick sold a large portion of their stock, retaining sufficient, however, to enable them to control the operations of The Gap Gold Company with Alex as its President and General Manager.

Alex made his headquarters at Roderickville, as the new town at The Gap was called, and it was to his plain though comfortable quarters at The Gap Hotel that he was glad to welcome Colonel Gordon, one beautiful warm evening about the first of August.

"I do not forget your kindness to me on one occasion in Halifax, Colonel," he said, shaking Colonel Gordon's hand warmly. "How goes it with the Hunting River Railway and Coal Company?"

"Not very well," Colonel Gordon answered, "not very well," and he gave Alex a full account of everything that had been done from the time he first took hold.

"Why, the proposition is gilt-edge," said Alex. "What's the matter with those people? If I weren't so busy getting this Gap Gold Company into shape I believe I'd go into that venture myself. Even as it is, I feel very much like doing so."

"That's just what brought me out here," said Colonel Gordon. "I saw by the press dispatches that you made a comfortable fortune out of The Gap proposition, so I thought I'd take a run to the West to see if you should care to invest any money in our undertaking."

"Well," said Alex, pulling out his cheque-book, "if you will allow me to hold a hundred thousand dollars worth of your company's bonds as security for a loan of fifty thousand dollars until I can look into the proposition I shall give you a cheque for the amount now."

"That's perfectly satisfactory," said Colonel Gordon who was delighted with the success of his long trip. "But I can't deliver the bonds until I get back East again as they are in a safe in my office at Beaton's Landing."

"That's all right, Colonel," said Alex. "Here's your cheque. I'll take your word for the delivery of the bonds. By the way, you better apply part of this money towards paying the personal loans you made to the company, and release that mortgage you were compelled to give on your private property to enable you to keep faith with your men."

"Well, that's awfully decent of you," said the Colonel who was deeply touched with Alex's magnanimity. "I am still at a loss to know what I ever did for you that you should treat me with such large-hearted generosity."

"You remember that attempt-to-murder case, do you not?"

"I must confess I do now recall that we were both interested in that case," was the Colonel's gracious answer.

"You know one good turn deserves another, Colonel, and I'm having my little inning now. But once more to business. I expect to leave here for the East about the last of the month, and shall have a look over the Hunting River undertaking with an expert, and if satisfied, as I have no doubt I shall, that project will have all the money necessary to carry it along to completion."

CHAPTER LII.

RE-UNITED.

ONE morning, about three weeks later, after having made the necessary arrangements for an absence of a couple of months, Alex stepped aboard the pullman-car of the east-bound train at Fernie. He was no longer a discouraged failure, but a splendid success. He was buoyant and happy, for he had succeeded and his success was honest and well deserved. It was not mere chance, for he had only succeeded by dint of dogged perseverance in the face of much hardship and suffering. Nor did he gloat over the possession of a generous fortune, but rejoiced to think that he at least had the means of helping those who had been kind to him and of relieving those who suffered or were in want.

At Medicine Hat station he met an old friend in the person of Gustave the Trapper, who had come into town the day before after a supply of provisions, and happened to be at the station.

"Don't you know me, my dear old friend?" said Alex, grasping the old trapper's hand.

"Oh, dear me, dear me," said the poor old fellow, his wrinkled face lighting up with delight, "I do, I

do. You are rancher who lose his way—got astray on prairie after crossing the Saskatchewan, eh? Oh, my sake, my sake, I remember you well.”

How are you getting along?”

“Very well, very well, thank you. I manage all right—to make living and pay my bill.”

“’Board!” shouted the conductor.

“The train is going,” said Alex, “so good-bye! But I’ll be back in a couple of months,” and after slipping ten twenty-dollar gold pieces into the old Frenchman’s hand, he bounded on the rear end of the pullman-car, leaving the kind-hearted old trapper standing on the platform, his face a study of mixed gratitude and surprise.

On his arrival at Truro, the following Saturday afternoon, Alex learned that he could not get any further east until Monday, whereupon he proceeded to Halifax and put up at the Bluenose Hotel.

“I am back again,” he said to himself, as he sat on the spacious veranda waiting for dinner. “But, oh, how many things have changed with me since I was here last! Poor Flora Stuart! I wonder if she is buried here. Yes,” he added sadly, “she must be—in the Stuart lot in the old cemetery. I must go out to buy some flowers for her grave. Poor little girl! I think she would be glad to see me if she were alive. But she has gone far, far away—far away home.”

Forthwith leaving the hotel, he purchased a large bouquet of lilies from a leading florist and proceeded to Holy Cross Cemetery to place them on Flora’s

grave. He was very lonely, and he took his time, first walking slowly along Barrington Street, then turning up Spring Garden Road. But opposite St. Mary's a pathetic figure arrested his attention—a poor young man, about his own age, coming along on crutches.

It was Fred Bludgeon. He had changed since Alex saw him last. He was no longer a hardened villain, but a poor, weak, sickly cripple, depending for the necessities of life on the parents he had disgraced.

For days and days he had lain between life and death in the hospital of St. Jean Penitentiary after he had been shot in the thigh by the guard, and it was only after months of untold suffering, while negotiations were going on for his release, that he was at length pardoned and sent home.

"Well, Fred," said Alex pleasantly, extending his hand. "What has happened, my poor boy?"

Poor Fred's eyes filled with tears. He even sobbed, so deeply touched was he by such kindness from one whom he had so greatly injured.

"Can you ever forgive me?" he cried, sinking between his crutches.

Alex at once understood.

"Poor Fred!" he said, lifting the penitent cripple up. "In my heart of hearts I have long since forgiven you. Forget all about the past, Freddie, my boy, and let's begin all over again by your accepting an invitation to dine with me at the Bluenose this evening."

"Who would have thought you would have been so princely in your generosity?" cried Fred.

"Who's that?" Alex asked, indicating, with a slight motion of his head, the beautiful young lady with a rather sad face who was coming towards them.

Fred looked up the street.

"Oh, that's Flora," he answered. "I deceived you, Alex, when I told you that she was dead."

An expression of doubt crossed Alex's handsome face.

"That's she," Fred assured him.

There could be no doubt. It was Flora Stuart. Fred had heard the gossip about her illness, which was started through the agency of kind-hearted Mrs. Salford's ever-wagging tongue, and from his once revengeful heart had come the deceit contained in the letter he had written to Alex whose heart now thrilled with a joy that knew no bounds. Even Fred himself looked singularly happy as he hobbled off to the Blue-nose Hotel to await Alex's return; in fact, it was the first real happiness he had known for years.

Meanwhile Alex stood waiting for Flora, who, upon recognizing him, unconsciously quickened her step. When they met, Alex took her hands in his, but he could not speak. Great tears of joy rolled down his ruddy, sun-burnt cheeks. Tears also flowed from Flora's lovely eyes in which the old, old tell-tale love-light once more brightly shone.

"Flora," he said with boyish frankness—it was the first time he ever called her Flora—"I never dared to

love you until now, because I felt that I could not make you happy. But I have succeeded since we parted last, and, oh, how I love you because you are beautiful, and kind, and good! Do you think you could ever care for me?"

"Care for you, Alex?" she said tenderly. "Why, I always loved you—loved you when first I saw you—loved you when first we met—loved you when the storm-clouds gathered—loved you when they hurried past—loved you all during your long absence, although I never heard from you, never heard of you, and did not know that we should ever meet again."

"Then," said Alex, "we shall be married next Tuesday."

"What will become of my poor father and mother?" she asked, for her parents were now poor and had to depend for their living on what she earned by teaching music and singing.

"They shall have every comfort," Alex assured her, "and shall never have cause to rue the day our fortunes are united."

"But," said the poor girl, first looking at her dress, then into the handsome face of her lover, "this dress is the best I have, and I fear I shall not have time to get another made before Tuesday."

"Why, Flora," said Alex tenderly, "that dress is good enough. It is not the dress I am marrying; it is the little girl herself, because she is good, and kind, and true. The marriage, if you are willing, my dear, will take place at Little Village where the people will

not care whether your dress is of silk or of muslin. You will have all the dresses you care to have when we are married. People look too much to the dress now-a-days and not enough to the heart."

Such a romantic way of uniting their fortunes, strongly appealed to Flora.

"I shall do all a poor girl may to meet your wishes and make you happy," she said, looking up with girlish confidence into the kindly dark-brown eyes of her lover.

"Then we shall leave here on Monday," said Alex. "Your father and mother and bridesmaid shall accompany us, and I shall bear all the expense."

"You are almost too kind and good," said the happy, happy girl, deeply touched by her lover's thoughtfulness.

"Then good-bye, my dear, until this evening."

"Good-bye."

CHAPTER LIII.

IN THE OLD HOME BY THE SEA.

EARLY Monday morning a merry party left Halifax, bound for Little Village—a party consisting of Robert Stuart, Mrs. Stuart, Mrs. Salford, Kathleen Salford, Fred Bludgeon, Flora and Alex, the time passing quickly until they arrived at Pictou where they were met by Captain Roderick who had come from Sydney the Saturday before, to take Alex across the Gulf to Little Village in the *Lady Eilleen*, his fast steam yacht. Although Captain Roderick was the same quaint old sea-dog, he looked more like a successful admiral than like an old coaster, with his closely cropped beard, white cap, handsome blue uniform, and patent-leather shoes.

“Wal—Miss Stuart,” he said to Flora, after he got over the great surprise Alex had in store for him, “I must certainly congratulate you’s, although,” he added, with characteristic waggishness, “I must confess I’m a little jealous of you’s, because, for a long time, I was thinkin’ I was about the only sweetheart sonny had. But you’ve come along and cut me out.”

A hearty laugh followed this good-natured sally, for Captain Roderick had already won the hearts of his new acquaintances.

The sun was setting as they neared Little Village—setting in the old, old place at the far edge of the now peaceful Gulf of St. Lawrence; and Flora stood beside her lover to watch the weary old sun sink to his place of rest beyond the sea. The old, old pathway was there—that familiar old pathway that Alex had loved to look at from the time he was a boy. It never looked so bright before, but it narrowed, narrowed, narrowed, as the sun sank lower and lower, and vanished, as it had always done, in the same old way.

Squire Angus was now getting old, many lines of care having lately formed on his honest face. When the merry wedding party came ashore, he happened to be sitting in the kitchen with his gentle wife, who, like himself, had a strange longing to see the absent boy that did not tell them he was coming.

“Who is that?” asked the Squire, who heard talking at the door.

“One of the neighbours after you to go to the shop, I suppose,” answered his wife.

Just then Alex entered with Flora, the rest of the party remaining behind.

“Mother!” he cried, kissing her fondly on the cheek as he took her hand.

“Oh, Alex, Alex, Alex!” his poor mother sobbed, leaning on his manly breast and weeping for joy.

"And father," he said, shaking the Squire's hand warmly. "This is Flora Stuart," he added, introducing his bride-elect, "the lovely girl I shall happily lead to the altar to-morrow morning."

Flora received an old-time welcome.

"God bless and prosper you both!" said the Squire. "Miss Stuart," he added, "I am most happy to welcome you to our humble country home. You are about to marry one of the finest fellows in the whole world. You are a very beautiful young girl, and unless I am much mistaken, you are in every way worthy of him."

"Indeed she is!" shouted Robert Stuart, opening the door.

He had been listening to what was going on, and could not contain himself any longer.

"She stood by her parents, supporting and comforting them when they lost all they had. She is, indeed, worthy of her noble lover."

The rest of the party then entered, and the news of their arrival having spread around the village, all of Alex's old friends came to see him and his lovely bride-elect. Oh, how soon that humble country home was changed from a place of loneliness into a place of joy! A generous supper was prepared, and the rejoicing was kept up until midnight when Alex and Fred returned to the yacht with Captain Roderick, to spend the night.

"Wal—sonny," said the old salt, when he and Alex were alone in the wheel-house, "I don't know how it

is, but it makes me feel kind of lonesome to see you gettin' married."

"How's that, Captain?" asked his happy, young friend.

"Wal—you see," the old sea-dog explained—and his voice grew soft and tender—"you and I have been great friends. Now another has stepped in to claim your love and devotion. It means, too," he added, "that you must leave the gang. You know home is the only place for a married man—not out with the boys, for he cannot serve two masters. Besides, a married man is more or less tied down. Some men don't object to shackles—I do. Of course, I's'd feel sorry for you's, sonny, only you's are gettin' such a beautiful girl for your new partnership. In your case you's are more to be envied than pitied. On general principles I must own I does admire a beautiful woman as I admire a golden sunset, a beautiful flower, or a sweet-throated thrush, but I'd certainly feel as much out of place hitched up in marriage, even with a beautiful woman, as I would with a bird-cage, or a flower-pot, or a sunset attached to me. . . . It's quare, but it's true."

"I'm afraid you're an incorrigible old bachelor, Captain," said Alex, laughing.

"Perhaps I am," said the old salt. "You know I was reared where the waves curl mountains high, and the stormy winds are niver still; and I love freedom as much as the mateless tempest that sweeps the northern seas. It's p'raps my misfortune rather than my

fault. But it doesn't keep me from wishin' that your new life be as heaven."

"Thank you, Captain, thank you," said Alex. "Tomorrow, it is true, I enter a new partnership. But remember, my dear old friend, that as together we have shared some of life's sorrow, so together we must share some of life's joy. My home shall be your home, and every winter when the northern seas are covered with ice, I want you to come and live with me in that Land of the Golden West where the winter winds blow warm, and the winter skies are always bright."

"It's a bargain, sonny!" said the old sea-dog, his kindly face aglow with happiness—and after heartily shaking hands to seal the compact, they forthwith left the wheel-house for the cabin below.

CHAPTER LIV.

L'ENVOIE.

A FEW hundred yards west of the town of Roderickville, in the heart of the Canadian Rockies, Alex built a beautiful home where he and Flora are living. He is still President and General Manager of The Gap Gold Company, and is greatly loved and respected. It is safe to say, too, that he and his beautiful wife will enjoy a large share of that imperfect happiness which this old world affords, for they still love each other dearly.

Shortly after his marriage he examined the property of the Hunting River Railway and Coal Company, with an expert engineer; and so favourably was he impressed with the outlook that he decided to invest heavily in the enterprise which ultimately proved a great success under Colonel Gordon's management. The railway was completed to Moose Cove where a splendid pier for winter shipments was built and equipped; and the output of the mine, under Mr. Bancroft's superintendence, was very largely increased. The stock of the company ran up to one hundred and seventy-five dollars a share, and at the

end of the financial year paid a dividend of seven dollars on each hundred dollars worth of stock.

A few weeks before the last annual meeting, which was held at Detroit, Alex received from Colonel Gordon a very kind letter signifying his intention of selling out his interests in the company and of resigning his position as its President and General Manager. Alex at once decided to sell out, too; and the day of the meeting, while the shareholders were congratulating each other on the success of the undertaking, they were told that Colonel Gordon had resigned.

"Can it be possible that we are going to lose the Colonel?" they asked their Secretary.

It was only too true. They offered to double his salary, but he would not consent to remain with the company on any consideration.

"What's the matter, Colonel?" asked Mr. Barnstead, of Pittsburg—one of his old associates.

"I heard you ask that question before, Mr. Barnstead," Colonel Gordon replied. "But I notice you are not quite so sarcastic now as you were on the occasion I refer to. I had long since made up my mind, however, to resign when I should succeed in putting the Hunting River proposition on a paying basis. I may add that if I had consulted my own feelings, my own interests, and my health, I should have resigned long ago. My remaining by the undertaking until it was successfully carried through was merely a matter of honour, which is more to me than health or any other interest."

"You are leaving us in a kind of an awkward position," said Mr. Barnstead meekly.

"How is that?" asked the Colonel.

"Where are we going to get a man to take charge?"

"I have made arrangements with Mr. C. W. Dalby, General Manager of the Cape Breton Consolidated, to take my place."

"I'd rather have you than any one else," said the venerable Aylward Lyons, of Detroit, an ex-Governor of Michigan, who was an old personal friend of the Colonel's.

"I know you would, Mr. Lyons," said the Colonel kindly. "Yet I cannot remain."

A vision of distant Wyoming—of mountain-sheep and white-tailed deer, of elk and grizzly—loomed large before his imagination; a call to the plains, and to the foothills, sounded loud in his ears—and he was firm in his decision.

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